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THE FORTNIGHTLY

JUNE 1950

THE EXTENT OF PRIVILEGE

BY SIR HARTLEY SHAWCROSS, M.P.

THE privileges of Parliament consist in the rights and powers which each House has established by long practice as being necessary to the maintenance of its dignity and particularly of its independence as the high court and legislature of the land. They include freedom of speech, a limited freedom from arrest, and the right of members to be protected against pressure or bribery. Some of these rights originated in the struggle of the Commons to assert its independence of the Crown. And later, in the seventeenth-eighteenth century, the matter was carried to an extreme and it became dangerous to trespass on a member's land or to fish in his waters. Now the pendulum has swung the other way ; I hope it will stick there. The courts do not interfere with a particular commitment by Parliament for breach of privilege and theoretically Parliament could commit anybody for anything, and the independence and the dignity of Parliament must certainly be maintained. But public opinion and the political sanction is usually enough and it would be a grave disservice to our Parliamentary system if Members did anything in the exercise of their privileges which went beyond what was absolutely necessary even if there were some ancient precedent to justify it. Whether collectively or individually, they ought not to be wrapped in any special cotton wool protection simply because they are Members.

How far are they so wrapped ? It is true that a Member of Parliament has an absolute privilege to say in Parliament whatever he likes—although it is a rule of honourable practice that he should not say that for which he does not accept personal responsibility. But that immunity is no cotton wool protection ; it is obviously essential to the discharge of his duties as a Member. And even so it is a privilege that only attaches to what he says in the House. If he publishes his speech outside, for instance, by sending it to the local paper as some do, or by sending a correct copy to a newspaper which has incorrectly reported him (which of course they never do !) there is no Parliamentary privilege. He may of course run up against the right of the House to suppress reports of its debates. This had a very valid origin, as a measure of self-protection against the Crown. And in the old days it was very strictly enforced.

Dr. Johnson got round it by reporting proceedings under the heading of "The Senate of Lilliput" and said "he always took care to put the Whig dogs in the wrong," adding that the "reports were frequently written from very slender materials and sometimes from none at all." Nowadays the power to suppress reports has fallen into disuetude, and Members are usually reluctant to hide their light under a bushel.

By a rather circuitous process, Parliament may treat as a breach of privilege any inaccurate or partial report of its proceedings. Publishing a deliberate misrepresentation of what a Member has said would certainly be a contempt. But Parliament may be expected to take a broad view. It did so in a case which was raised last year. It did so last century when one of the Irish Members complained that *The Times* had not adequately reported what he said. Mr. O'Connor replied: "If *The Times* did not accurately report what the hon. Member did say, other papers reported what he did not say and he might set the one against the other." Parliament let it go at that. But this should be said: it is certainly within the power of Parliament to take action for contempt if there were a deliberate misrepresentation or a deliberate policy of suppression against particular Members or if reports were persistently unfair or partial. It really is of great importance to all political parties—because it is important to the Parliamentary institution itself—that news reports should be as full as space permits and should be impartial.

What can the press say about the Member of Parliament? So far as the law of Parliament is concerned—but there is also the law of libel—it can say a lot. In fact, so far as the law of Parliament is concerned, the press can say pretty well what it likes, provided this is not said of the M.P. in his capacity as a Member. To say something which imputes that a member is unfit to have been elected or to serve may be a contempt. But how far the press can go is illustrated by another case involving *The Times*. In 1887 the paper alleged that certain Members "drew their living from the steady perpetration of crimes for which civilization demands the gallows." But it was held that the statement did not refer to them in their capacity as Members. Not that I advise the saying of such things now. And anyway there is always the law of libel.

I have always advised my friends not to engage in libel actions, on one side or the other, if they can help it. And, a most unusual thing for a politician, I have often taken my own advice. Of course, there are some cases in which an action is inevitable, and I certainly would not take the view that the law of libel should be abolished altogether. But we are perhaps a little too squeamish nowadays, and perhaps a little too resentful of criticism. (Not only politicians are guilty; if I were to make a list of those who resent criticism most, I should put them in this order: prima donnas, newspaper owners, film stars,

bridge players, politicians and working journalists.) People in public life are well advised to consider it undignified and unnecessary to resort to the courts. Generally speaking, the man who is not content to rely on the broad reaction of the tribunal of public opinion when he is unfairly attacked deserves as little confidence from the public as he has in himself. Fortunately, however, for the lawyers, libel actions continue.

Sometimes these actions are very unmeritorious, and demands are made that the law of libel should be amended so as to give still greater freedom to the press. Broadly speaking, I personally am in favour of extending the protection which the press possesses. But there are some lawyers and some politicians—and in both political parties—who think it would be wrong because basically freedom of the press is simply the result of the freedom we all enjoy to say what we like, subject to the law. And, of course, there is substance in this argument. Certainly the reason why I would set myself against any restriction of the freedom of the press is that it would involve a restriction of my freedom as an individual; I will put up with the press criticizing me because I may some day want to criticize the press. But there are some matters which, while they ought not to be retailed with impunity from mouth to mouth as a matter of idle gossip, it may be in the public interest that the press should be free to publish without the risk of an action for damages. And so I personally am in favour of the broad proposals of Lord Porter's Committee which would give some special privileges to the press. The press ought to be trusted to exercise a greater responsibility as to what it publishes than the private individual.

Privilege carries responsibility and, in general, where special privileges exist, machinery is set up to ensure that they are exercised with responsibility and not abused. Parliament would deal with a member who abused his privileges; at the Bar, where we enjoy complete privilege to say what we like, there is a very strict professional control to make sure we do not overstep the mark, and those who, like myself, would wish to increase the privileges of the press would be greatly encouraged and helped if the press itself established some machinery commanding public confidence which could deal with abuses of freedom if any arose. Lord Porter's Committee itself recommended something of the kind and there was also the specific recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Press. The importance to the community of full and frank discussion of matters of public interest may outweigh the importance of protecting the individual against injury to his reputation, but it would be easier to press for the additional privileges which it is suggested might be granted to the Press if it were made obvious to the public that there would be some remedy for a departure from responsible and decent

standards. The problem, significant in a political democracy, is how to protect liberty of speech without promoting licence.

There are, as the law recognizes, some occasions when it is a man's duty to express his real opinion fully and frankly to those who have a legitimate interest to hear it. If on such an occasion something defamatory is said the defence of privilege can be raised. Indeed in a few cases the importance of securing complete independence of speech is so great that the defence is absolute : a protection even though what was said was said maliciously or dishonestly. But that is unusual ; in the majority of cases the defence is qualified by this ; that if it is shown that the occasion was abused by saying something which there was no duty to say, and, saying it for some malicious or indirect motive, then the protection goes. The troublesome thing for the press (and the lucrative thing for the lawyers) is that it is by no means on every occasion on which the press might think there was a duty to speak that privilege arises. There is a case for reform.

So far as absolute privilege is concerned, I think there is only one case in which a newspaper can claim it, and that accidentally. At common law, reports of judicial proceedings were entitled to qualified privilege if they were fair and accurate. In 1888 the Law of Libel Amendment Bill was introduced to give an absolute privilege to such reports. Parliament was not so friendly to the press then as now and in Committee absolute privilege was struck out, the deliberate intention being to limit the defence to a qualified privilege liable to be destroyed if it were shown, for instance, that the object of the publication was not to report a matter of public interest, but to damage a man politically. In fact, owing to the way the statute was drafted, the better opinion is that there still is an absolute privilege provided the report is contemporaneous.

In all the other cases in which the press is likely to be able to avail itself of privilege, it is qualified only : a protection provided the publication is fair and accurate and not published for some ulterior, political or personal motive. Even reports of Parliamentary proceedings are only entitled to qualified privilege. And so on that basis there is high authority for the view that if a newspaper published a single speech only, out of a whole debate, that would not be protected. Sometimes only one speech is worth reporting, sometimes there is only one speech which has news interest and that because it contains something defamatory. Other speeches may qualify or explain, and so the rule is fair enough.

Then there are reports of public meetings and of local authority meetings. The meeting must be a public one. If the press attended a meeting of creditors and reported any of defamatory things said, there would be no protection—unless indeed it could bring itself within the old common law rule that privilege will attach to anything

which there is a legal or social duty to communicate to the public generally because all the public ought to know it. Thus to report, mistakenly, that a certain doctor had been struck off the medical register might be privileged on the ground that the public at large ought to know that the doctor, who might treat any one of them, had been struck off. Not so with a report that the doctor had been warned off Newmarket Heath ; reports of proceedings of the Jockey Club are not protected. The case of privilege, that there is a duty to communicate to persons who have legitimate interest to hear, creates a wide umbrella. But hardly wide enough for the press, for it would be rare for the duty to involve publication to all the world. And of course the defence on which the press should always seek to be able to rely is truth.

The rule about meetings being public is important. The public and reporters must be admitted, not necessarily freely but without discrimination. A meeting of members of the Communist Party might contain much of public concern which it would be for the public benefit to report, but the report is not privileged. It is a limiting rule which ought to be modified so as to cover some meetings—for instance those of Companies—which are of public concern.

Business conducted by local authorities is obviously of public concern ; usually reporting of it is for public benefit. But reports are privileged only if the meetings are public. Some local authorities occasionally seek to prevent reporting by referring discussion to committees, and not admitting the press. That destroys privilege even if a report could be obtained. Some things obviously ought to be discussed in private ; there is franker and more objective discussion, with less playing to the gallery and less fear of political consequences. And that is more so in the case of local authorities than of Parliament, especially since members of local authorities are not protected in what they say by absolute privilege. All the same, general business of local authorities ought to be conducted in public. Private discussion of public affairs should be the exception rather than the rule. Generally the harm done by publicity is less than the dangers attached to discussion behind closed doors.

There is one other class of meeting reports which ought obviously to be protected but which are not. No privilege attaches to reports of foreign legislatures, UNO and so on. From time to time the Slav representatives have attributed to me the remarkable versatility of being a fascist beast, a tiger, a chameleon, a boa constrictor and a pimp. Is that defamatory ? But if the delegate of Byelorussia in the course of some otherwise dull debate calls me thief and murderer, a report of that would not be privileged. It should be, and so also should reports of statutory boards, so far as their proceedings are public.

As a matter of law then, as well as a matter of political and professional ethics, privilege exists only if the occasion and the right to speak frankly are not abused for some ulterior purpose. In some cases the very violence or intemperance of what is said may be some evidence that what is alleged is not being said in good faith. But when the tone of public life generally and of newspapers in particular is compared with a hundred years ago there is a marked improvement in many respects. In some matters there is still room for greater responsibility. There have been cases of group libel which have caused anxiety : the careless use of facts in order to found partisan comment, and invasions of privacy—what Mr. Justice Brandeis called “ the right to be left alone.” And then there are the harsh and cruel attacks of a personal kind which are occasionally made on men and women in public life. If they are exposed not merely to criticism of their policy—as they ought to be—but to personal obloquy and abuse we shall eventually have the kind of public men and women which that kind of conduct deserves. If politicians and civil servants are constantly accused of evil motives, harried in their private lives, held up to public scorn, only those with evil motives will interest themselves in the public service of the country.

It is a long time since Lord Baldwin charged a certain section of the press of exercising the privilege of the harlot throughout the ages, of power without responsibility. You would not easily get now a public encounter such as occurred between John Wilkes and the then Earl of Sandwich. “ I am convinced, Mr. Wilkes,” said Sandwich, “ that you will die either of a pox or on the gallows.” “ That depends, my lord,” was Wilkes’s reply, “ whether I embrace your mistress or your morals.” And the improvement is not the result of changes in the law. It is due in the main to improvements in manners, ethics and personal responsibility all round ; the last election was a notable example of this ; time was when personal abuse, rhetorical extravagance, misrepresentation, and so on, were not without effect.

There is a major safeguard, whether it be in the case of the press or of the individual against abuses of the freedoms we possess. In the end, abuses recoil on the heads of those who commit them and it is on the sense of decency and responsibility, not only of the public at large, but also of the great professions rather than on legal restrictions that we must rely in order to ensure that liberty is promoted and licence discouraged.

(The Attorney General’s contribution is based on his recent address to the Women’s Press Club.)

PARLIAMENT AND FINANCE

BY PAUL EINZIG

B RITISH Parliament owes its existence to the determination of the English people to secure, through its chosen representatives, strict control over the nation's finances. It took centuries of hard struggle to establish two of the fundamental principles of the British Constitution that there must be no taxation without consent and that the proceeds of taxation must be spent in accordance with the wishes of Parliament. Yet the fruits of Parliament's hard-won victory over the executive power are now being wasted or are losing their practical value under our very eyes.

The last two years have witnessed a drastic curtailment of Parliament's control over taxation. Until 1949 it was the right of every Member to move amendments to the Finance Bill proposing any tax reductions. In 1949 Sir Stafford Cripps drastically curtailed this right, by including in the Budget resolutions a provision* which ruled out the possibility of moving amendments aiming at a reduction of purchase tax, or even of discussing purchase tax reductions at all. On the face of it the Government acted openly; the provision was in the published text of the last Budget resolution on which the Budget debate took place. The Opposition could and should have discovered it, and even though its resistance would have been foredoomed to failure owing to the Government's overwhelming uncritical majority in the Parliament of 1945-1950, it would have been the duty of the Conservative Party to register its protest before the Budget resolutions were adopted. When the Opposition realized what had happened it did protest against the curtailment of its rights. But the fact remained that the provision which assailed the very foundations of the British Constitution was passed unchallenged.

It must be said, however, in mitigation of the negligence of which the Opposition was undoubtedly guilty, that its oversight was almost entirely the result of the change of Parliamentary procedure introduced by the Government in 1947 through a revision of the standing order under which the Budget resolutions, having once been passed by the Committee of Ways and Means, can no longer be debated by the House on the Report stage which has been reduced to a pure formality. This change was brought about by Mr. Herbert Morrison—who as

* "That it is expedient to amend the law with respect to the National debt and the public revenue (other than purchase tax), and to make further provision in connection with finance."

Leader of the House was responsible for the adoption of the new standing orders—in defiance of the emphatic recommendation to the contrary by the Select Committee on Procedure set up for the purpose of advising the Government and Parliament on this and other matters. In its third report dated October 31, 1946, this committee pointed out that the elimination of a debate on the Report stage of the Budget resolutions would deprive Parliament of every opportunity for debating and scrutinizing those resolutions. For it is the practice that the resolutions are communicated to the House on Budget day immediately after the Chancellor of the Exchequer has concluded his Budget statement, and that thereupon, before Members have had time even to read these texts, all but the last of the resolutions are passed formally on their Committee stage without any discussion whatever. It is true, the last resolution is not passed on that occasion. The whole Budget debate takes place technically on that resolution which usually contains nothing but a vague formula to enable the debate to proceed on very broad lines, covering not only the entire Budget but, in recent years, also the general economic situation. Because of the purely procedural character of this resolution, nobody pays much attention to its wording during the Budget debate. Thus it happened that, when the provision depriving Members of their right to move or debate reductions of purchase tax was inserted in the last Budget resolution in 1949, nobody noticed it.

There can be little doubt that, had the Budget resolutions been dealt with in the same way as they had been before the modification of the standing orders, this omission would have been repaired on the Report stage. On that occasion each resolution is closely scrutinized individually, and it seems most unlikely that the inclusion in the last resolution of the provision regarding purchase tax would have escaped the attention of Opposition M.P.s. Not being accustomed to the new procedure they did not realize the need for a close examination of the last resolution on its Committee stage.

The adoption of the procedure was in itself a by no means unimportant curtailment of Parliament's right to debate taxation. The use made of it by the Government in 1949 fully justified the objections contained in the report of the Select Committee, objections which were brushed aside by the Government. It is worth mentioning that there was a strong socialist majority on the Select Committee which opposed the virtual elimination of the Report stage of the Budget resolutions—the Party Whips have no power in Select Committees—but the Government, relying on Party discipline, forced the measure through the House, in contemptuous disregard of the Select Committee's findings.

Technically Sir Stafford Cripps is in a position to claim that the provision curtailing Parliament's ancient right to move tax reductions

was printed in the text of a Budget resolution for everybody to see. It may well be asked, however, whether there can be any excuse for bringing about a fundamental change in the Constitution by such means. Surely it would have been the Government's duty to point out the proposed change, to put forward the arguments in favour of making it, and to defend it during the Budget debate, instead of inserting it into a text which was not likely to receive much attention. In his Budget speech lasting over two-and-a-half hours, Sir Stafford Cripps dealt in detail with many less important matters ; he might have used two minutes for telling his audience that, for considerations of convenience, he was about to propose a modification of one of the basic principles of the Constitution.

To realize the full importance of what happened in 1949 it is necessary to bear in mind that, ever since Parliament made its appearance in a rudimentary form in the thirteenth century, the Crown had the initiative for moving the adoption of new taxes and the increase of existing ones, while Parliament had the initiative for moving the repeal or reduction of taxes. During the long struggle for financial control between kings and parliaments, it often happened that some of the more despotic rulers responded to resolutions to cut taxes by dissolving Parliament. There is no precedent, however, for any attempt to deprive Parliament of any part of its right to oppose tax reductions and to debate taxation.

When in May 1949 the Finance Bill came to be debated the Opposition, realizing somewhat belatedly that it would be out of order to move amendments in respect of purchase tax, or even to discuss purchase tax, raised a storm of protest. This year Sir Stafford Cripps did not go so far. Under the provision inserted in the last Budget resolution, Members are entitled to move amendments proposing the reduction of an entire class of purchase tax items (there are three classes, subject to a duty of 33½ per cent., 66½ per cent. and 100 per cent. respectively) but they are precluded from moving amendments relating to reductions of individual items. This means that, if an M.P. feels it is absurd that gramophones should be charged 66½ per cent. and wireless sets 33½ per cent. only, he is entitled to move the reduction to 33½ per cent. of *all* items on which the duty is at present 66½ per cent., but he is not allowed to move the reduction of the tax on gramophones alone. He can only try to remedy the existing anomaly by moving the reduction of the tax not only on gramophones but on a very large number of other goods, even if he sees not the slightest reason for their reduction.

In practice the new formula does enable a Member at least to advocate the reduction of individual purchase tax items by tabling an amendment moving the reduction of an entire class. He will then be in order to argue in favour of his amendment and to quote

the instance of the item which he would like to reduce, as an illustration of his argument. Since he is presumably not in favour of an all-round reduction for the sake of obtaining the reduction of one item, he will probably not press his amendment to division. This state of affairs is beyond doubt an improvement compared with that of a year ago when he was not allowed even to mention purchase tax reductions. Nevertheless, his right to propose tax reductions has remained curtailed.

This time the curtailment was not the result of the Opposition being caught unawares. It is the result of a compromise accepted by the spokesman of the Opposition. It is true, when the question of the interpretation of the restrictive provision was raised in the House and Sir Stafford Cripps gave his interpretation on the above lines, Mr. Oliver Stanley accepted it on behalf of the Conservative Party with the reservation that it must not be regarded as a precedent, and suggested that some compromise should be negotiated between the two parties before the next Budget. Nevertheless, since the Opposition submitted passively to the new formula, and did not divide the House over the last Budget resolution in protest against the principle involved, in 1950 the Government curtailed Parliament's right to reduce taxation without encountering active resistance by the Opposition.

Sir Stafford Cripps's case in favour of this curtailment rests on the inconvenience caused to the Government by a large number of amendments moving the reduction of individual purchase tax items at the committee stage of the Finance Bill. Beyond doubt, it is a nuisance for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to have to cope with such amendments, especially as some of them are bound to be popular among his own supporters. Why the Opposition has not displayed more vigour in resisting the curtailment may be explained perhaps by the possibility that the next Budget will be introduced by Mr. Stanley, and it would be understandable if he too would like to be spared the unenviable task of dealing with a multitude of amendments relating to individual purchase tax items. The case against the unrestricted exercise of Parliament's right to move tax reductions is not very strong, however, even on purely practical grounds. For the Speaker has the right to select the amendments which he calls, and he is in a position to prevent an undue disorganization of the timetable of Parliamentary business through the need for debating an unlimited number of amendments. The exercise of this right cannot be regarded, from a constitutional point of view, as a curtailment of Parliament's ancient privilege. The Speaker is identified with the House of Commons, and any refusal on his part to call certain amendments may be regarded as a self-imposed restriction, not a restriction imposed on the legislature by the executive.

In any event, even if the free exercise of Members' right to move tax reductions were to entail delay in the adoption of the Finance Bill on its committee and report stages, the additional Parliamentary time would be well spent since it ensured the maintenance of that right. If it left less time for new legislation, it must be remembered that during the past eleven years the country has been subjected to a flood of new laws, and a partial respite would be welcome from more than one point of view. That the inconvenience caused by the unrestricted exercise of Parliament's right was not unduly grave is proved by the fact that even before the first adoption of the restrictive provision in 1949 the Government always managed to achieve the passage of the Finance Bill according to schedule. But even if the practical argument against the freedom to move tax reductions were unanswerable, it would be well worth while for Government, Parliament and country to put up with a fair amount of practical inconvenience for the sake of upholding one of the major constitutional safeguards.

We ought to bear in mind that the present departure from that principle might prove to be the thin end of a wedge which could have grave constitutional consequences for centuries to come. Chancellors of the Exchequer may feel tempted to follow the precedent, and to enforce, with the support of servile Government majorities, additional curtailments of Parliament's right whenever this suits their immediate practical convenience.

The weakening trend of Parliament's control over public finance is not confined to the revenue side. The House of Commons appears to have lost its grip also on the purse-strings and its control of expenditure has weakened considerably in recent years. Technically, it is true the rôle of the House in respect of estimates and audited accounts of expenditure has remained the same as it was before the war ; in fact, there has been some progress towards increasing the efficiency of the Select Committee on Estimates. That committee now performs its functions through the intermediary of a number of sub-committees. It is no longer content with cross-examining heads of Departments but takes evidence also from senior officials and even from outside bodies concerned with Government expenditure. Such improvements as have been achieved in this and other spheres are negligible, however, compared with the growth of the task Parliament has to face if it is to perform effectively the rôle of controller of expenditure.

Even before the war Parliament's actual control over estimates was very far from satisfactory. Indeed, critics of the system during the 'twenties—amongst them two former Financial Secretaries to the Treasury, Sir Hilton Young (now Lord Kennet) and Major Hills—condemned the hopeless inefficiency of Parliament's control in such emphatic terms that no post-war writer could possibly improve on

them. Yet the need for closer control has increased beyond comparison since the war, partly because of the spectacular increase of the amounts spent, and partly because of the frequency of changes that are liable to occur from year to year in the nature of expenditure. During the inter-war period Government expenditure had settled down more or less, and the number and extent of changes from one year to another was comparatively small. Since the war, however, the Government has embarked on various kinds of new expenditure, and in the absence of the guidance of tradition and experience the Departments concerned are apt to overspend. In fact, a spendthrift mentality prevails throughout Whitehall as a reaction from excessive caution before the war. This alone would call for a higher degree of vigilance by Members of Parliament. Moreover, since taxation, after five years of peace, is still very near the limit of endurance, and the only hope for its reduction lies in the enforcement of economies, the taxpayer looks towards Parliament for long overdue relief.

Parliament is not equipped adequately, however, to face this formidable task. In theory it passes every item of civil estimates not less than 26 times ; the House of Commons passes them 18 times, the Select Committee once, the Public Accounts Committee checks the audited accounts, and the House of Lords goes through the gestures of passing the Consolidated Fund Bills in March and August on first, second and third reading, without the power of altering them. In practice the overwhelming majority of items is passed without any examination whatever. Debates on supply days and on the various stages of the Consolidated Fund Bills are usually on broad general subjects of popular appeal, instead of technical details of expenditure. The two Select Committees may scrutinize some selected items with great care, but they are not expected to scrutinize closely all items. In any case they are merely advisory bodies, and there is no need for the Government to take action on their findings.

The Select Committee on Procedure recommended the amalgamation of the two committees into one single committee on expenditure. This reform would enable the combined committee to split into a larger number of specialist sub-committees which could cover the ground more thoroughly. Moreover, the Comptroller and Auditor General and his staff of experts, whose task is now confined to examining the accounts of expenditure and submitting their findings to the Public Accounts Committee long after the money is spent, would be able to examine estimates, and their findings would help Parliament to bolt the stable door before the horse goes. The Select Committee's recommendation has remained, however, a dead letter.

(Dr. Einzig is political correspondent of the "Financial Times.")

THE UNEASY CARIBBEAN

BY N. P. MACDONALD

RECENT developments in the cold war in Europe and Asia have overshadowed less spectacular but not insignificant events in the Caribbean. Tensions there which have smouldered for more than a century have tended, during the last three years, to come to a climax in the form of open war. Such hostilities, by threatening the Panama Canal, and thus the security of the United States and of the whole Western Hemisphere, would have played straight into the hands of Moscow. But the danger has been averted, at least for the moment, by the Organization of American States, which is composed of the United States and the 20 Latin American republics.

In these events President Rafael Trujillo y Molina of the Dominican Republic has occupied a prominent place. That is a reflection of the fact that the roots of these tensions in the Caribbean are entangled with the hostility that has persisted between the Dominican Republic and the neighbouring Republic of Haiti since the early years of the nineteenth century. The two States share the island of Hispaniola, first discovery of Columbus in the New World ; but they have been at odds since Haiti, led by Toussaint l'Ouverture, cast off her allegiance to France, and Santo Domingo, as the Dominican Republic was then known, declared her independence of Spain.

The explanation of present disputes is to be found in the subsequent history of the two republics. When Columbus first touched at Hispaniola he was lyrical in his praise of the natural beauties of the place, and described the inhabitants as "intelligent and cultivated." But before many years had passed the natives had been almost exterminated by the Spaniards who, to make good the resulting deficiency of labour, then imported Negro slaves from Africa. This admixture of Negro blood, coupled with the practice by the Spaniards of barbarities unparalleled anywhere in the Americas, encouraged a way of life in which human life was cheaper, and enmities more bitter, even than in other parts of the Spanish Empire. It was against that background that the foundations were laid of the disputes that have been engaging the attention of the New World of the twentieth century. Once independent, Santo Domingo and Haiti proceeded to build on those foundations an edifice of distrust and hatred.

In 1822 the predominantly Negro inhabitants of Haiti, desiring

to make a black paradise of the whole island, invaded and occupied the year-old republic of Santo Domingo. This black avalanche led to the exodus from Santo Domingo of the better-class white families, so that, by the time Haitian rule came to an end in 1844, those who might have tempered despotism with a sense of responsibility in the direction of affairs were too few to influence the course of events. As a result, the republic was characterized by struggles between rival strong men for the privilege of ruling—and taxing—their fellow citizens. The first of them survived four years, but the next 13 years saw the assumption of power by eight presidents, the outbreak of five revolutions, and the introduction of three new constitutions.

By 1861 the few clear-headed men who remained, convinced that annexation by some great power able to preserve order was the only hope for their country, appealed to France. But Napoleon III was heavily committed in Mexico. The United States were barred; the advantages of American rule were outweighed by the unfavourable status accorded to Negroes. An approach was therefore made to Spain, and in 1863 Spanish rule was re-established in Santo Domingo. But the inhabitants had become too accustomed to rebellion, and within two years they had expelled the Spaniards for the second and last time. The republic which was then re-introduced was no less prolific in internal disturbances than the first. Even during the so-called War of Restoration to oust the Spaniards one general had been murdered, and another imprisoned, by political rivals. A three-cornered intrigue now established a president whose agility in constitution-making—he proclaimed two in the space of four months—did not prevent his fall in less than half a year. During the next 53 years the republic suffered under 35 presidents, 23 successful and nine abortive revolutions, against a background of 14 new constitutions. Those responsible for this turmoil as often as not laid their plans in neighbouring Haiti, whither they or their rivals promptly fled if the luck of the revolution was against them. In the meantime it was the nine-tenths of the inhabitants of Santo Domingo with no part in politics who had to pay for them. When the smoke from their burning crops and homes had cleared away they were expected to provide wealth for the latest dictator. No less than £4,000,000, a vast sum for so small a country, was squeezed from the poorer classes, nominally in payment of taxes, while the wealthy few escaped all impositions.

By 1905 the country was in dire distress. Agriculture was as good as ruined and commerce was at a standstill. Treasury loans stood at £6,000,000, with only a short narrow gauge railway and a couple of rusty gunboats to show for them. All port dues were mortgaged to foreign creditors who were about to foreclose.

An appeal was made to the United States, but President Theodore

Roosevelt refused to intervene directly. Instead he devised a *modus vivendi* designed to restore Dominican economy. As a result, the Government share of the Customs revenue, 55 per cent. of which was set aside for the service of foreign loans, became greater than the entire revenue had previously been. Such large sums were an attractive prize, and disturbances once more broke out, with the president who had accepted the *modus vivendi* in revolt against his own government. Three new presidents, and two fresh constitutions, brought the country once more to the brink of ruin, and in 1916 Washington intervened directly, to prevent any more disturbances. The same year saw American intervention in Haiti, where similar chaos prevailed.

Under United States tutelage both States began to turn the corner, and as American control was progressively withdrawn the Dominican Republic began to forge ahead of its Haitian neighbours. The aftermath of the world depression, with its effect on Dominican exports of sugar, her main product, brought Señor Trujillo into the picture, and he has remained virtual dictator of the country, either as president, or as the power behind a presidential puppet, for 17 years. Superficially, at least, he has been a success. Neon lights now glitter in the towns ; the highest mountain in the republic, new bridges and even the capital, have been named after him. More important, the country now exports twice as much as it imports, and it has become one of the few Caribbean States virtually able to feed itself, thanks in part to the labours of refugees from European oppression. Señor Trujillo had the imagination to invite 100,000 of them to take refuge in his country just before the war, at a time when other and larger States were inclined to let the exiles fend for themselves.

But, as has been seen, the 2,000,000 inhabitants of the Dominican Republic are prone to make a hobby of political upheaval. And so Señor Trujillo, with historical evidence at hand that disturbances and development do not go hand in hand, has ruled with a firm and often ruthless vigour. As a consequence many of his opponents have fled, in the traditional way, to neighbouring countries, whence they have plotted his downfall. Their activities contributed to a prelude to recent disputes when he was accused of responsibility for the alleged massacre of 5,000 Haitians on the frontier between the two countries in 1938. The Dominican dictator was accused of harbouring ambitions to occupy Haiti, and so turn the tables on his country's former rulers, and he was freely accused of having equipped himself with twelve modern bombers and numberless machine-guns for that purpose.

The dispute between the two countries continued to smoulder through the war, and by the end of 1946 the plotters were again active, and at the end of last year President Trujillo used their doings

as a pretext for asking Congress to give him power to declare war against any Caribbean nation which knowingly harboured anyone intriguing against the Dominican Republic. While promising that he would never use this power for aggression, Trujillo accused Cuba of allowing her territory to be used by a force of 1,600 men to prepare an attack on him, and declared that Guatemala and Costa Rica were aiding and abetting them. There was some foundation for these charges. Since the war at least two abortive expeditions had been launched against the Dominican Republic from neighbouring States, supported by the shadowy and partly communist Caribbean Legion. Señor Trujillo reacted by spending 20,000,000 dollars on arms. Thus his new power to declare war, the announcement of which was broadcast to a crowd of 10,000 in a square of his capital, and placarded throughout the country, was buttressed by well-equipped forces.

But there was more to this potentially dangerous situation than plots by exiles against a dictator and his reaction to them. Trujillo had accused Haiti of intrigue at various times since the war, and in his message to Congress he had added Cuba, Guatemala and Costa Rica to the ranks of his opponents. On his side it was thought that he had military understandings with Nicaragua and Honduras. Thus, not only was the Dominican Republic ranged against the neighbouring republic of Haiti and Cuba, but in Central America four more States were liable to become involved in any hostilities. Nor was that all ; for Venezuela was reported to support Guatemala. In short, the ingredients were in existence for a conflict which would set ablaze the Caribbean, Central America and, inevitably, involve the Panama Canal. Disturbances in Panama and Colombia a few weeks before President Trujillo asked for his special powers showed how much tinder was to hand.

Somewhat unexpectedly, it was Haiti which took the first steps to meet the danger. Alarmed by the Dominican Republic's new powers, the Haitian Government complained to the Organization of American States that her Dominican neighbours were harbouring plotters against her. Three days later President Trujillo lodged a similar complaint about Cuba, Costa Rica and Guatemala.

The Organization of American States constitutes a regional pact within the United Nations. It was set up under the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance signed at Rio de Janeiro in 1947. That agreement was primarily concerned with action by the American republics against an attack from outside the hemisphere. But it also provides that a cease-fire order shall be issued if any two of the American republics themselves take up arms against each other. The Organization of American States therefore set up a committee of inquiry to investigate the basis of the complaints from Haiti and

the Dominican Republic, and their background of rumours of mysterious aircraft flying by night, and of plots and plans devised by the mainly invisible Caribbean Legion.

Within a few weeks President Trujillo abandoned his special power to declare war. Mr. Acheson had already told him that sabre-rattling had no place in the Americas, and a storm of criticism from other Latin American countries had emphasized that such special powers were contrary to the spirit of the Rio Treaty. Not least, and possibly by coincidence, the American Atlantic Fleet, with more than 100 ships, carried out manoeuvres "in the area of Cuba and Haiti." These reactions may have made Señor Trujillo realize that, in the eyes of his neighbours, he had put himself in the wrong. Or he may have hoped that, by relinquishing his special powers, he could ingratiate himself with the committee of inquiry. But whatever the reason for it, his action was an essential step towards a restoration of confidence in the Caribbean.

In due course the committee of inquiry presented an 18,000-word report which minced no words. This document declared that the Dominican Republic had failed to prevent activities on its territory directed against Haiti. Cuba was found to have been equally negligent in preventing plots against the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala was severely censured for having allowed the fitting-out of an expedition intended to attack the Dominican Republic from the air. This was the most spectacular of the episodes investigated by the committee. They reported that aircraft for this attack were "fitted out and made ready at San José military air base in Guatemala under the supervision of the chief of the Guatemalan air forces." They added that the inspection of some sub-machine guns captured by the Dominican authorities showed them to have serial numbers which "corresponded exactly to those of precisely the same quantity of weapons acquired in the United States by an agent of the Guatemalan Government and exported in January 1949, with the Guatemalan Ministry of Defence as their destination." Haiti alone was found innocent of any designs on her neighbours.

Against the background of these and many other facts the Council of the Organization of American States ordered the Dominican Republic to take immediate and effective steps to prevent its Government officials from "tolerating, instigating, encouraging, aiding or fomenting subversive or seditious movements against other Governments." Cuba and Guatemala were ordered to take adequate measures to break up armed bands such as the Caribbean Legion which, it was held, had conspired to undermine the security of other nations. On receiving the committee's report the Council decided to set up a second committee to see that its orders are carried out. As in the first committee, the members of this body represent Colombia,

Uruguay, Ecuador, Bolivia and the United States. It is backed by a warning from the Council that sanctions will be applied under the terms of the Rio Treaty if there is any further unrest in the Caribbean.

This action by the Organization of American States is encouraging evidence that the machinery set up by the Rio Treaty can function when put to the test. But although the Council has threatened sanctions for any violation of its rulings, it is questionable how far the present culprits will, despite the watch-dog committee, do as they have been told. Cuba and Guatemala are inclined to deny the offences laid at their doors. For his part, President Trujillo has proposed an amnesty for political exiles, to be followed by mutual guarantees among the various countries concerned that they will not tolerate political activity by refugees. But it is doubtful if a device of this kind can succeed. There are too many refugees, they have too many grievances, and there is too much traditional bitterness in the politics of the Balkans of the New World. Not least, the communists, whose hands have been faintly detectable in these disputes, have a vested interest in perpetuating unrest in this strategic area. At best, it seems, the Organization of American States can only sit on the lid and prevent plots from boiling over into open war.

(A special correspondent, the author has studied Latin and mid-American affairs over a long period.)

JERUSALEM AND THE UNITED NATIONS

BY NORMAN BENTWICH

IN Israel to-day they speak of a new kind of capitalism, which has nothing to do with the accumulation of wealth or with the exploitation of human effort by capitalist employers. It signifies the agitation about Jerusalem, which has been declared by the Government the capital city of the State of Israel, but which a resolution of the last Assembly of the United Nations proposed to place under an international trusteeship régime. The feeling of the Jewish people about Jerusalem is exactly like the feeling of the Italian people about Rome, the other Eternal City, after the Risorgimento. Their freedom, their independence, their intellectual and spiritual renaissance cannot be achieved unless the city which is bound up with their greatest and deepest memories is the centre of the nation. And it is notable that the power which stands in the way of their desire is the same power as stood in the way of the desire of the Italian people for unity in the last century, the Vatican of Rome. As G. M. Trevelyan pointed out in his history of Garibaldi, Rome had to be won from the forces of the great tradition of Catholicism.

Ever since the siege of the Jewish area of Jerusalem by the armies of the Arab States was relieved by the Israeli forces in the summer of 1948, the Jewish people have made up their minds that Jerusalem must be the capital of the Republic of Israel. The General Assembly of the United Nations in November 1947, which adopted the resolution for the ending of the British mandate and the division of Palestine into an Arab State and a Jewish State, envisaged a special régime for the city of Jerusalem and a considerable area around it, including Bethlehem. It should be a *corpus separatum*, detached administratively from both Jewish and Arab states ; and in order to protect and preserve the unique spiritual and religious interests located in the city, it should be placed under an international trusteeship, with a Governor appointed by the United Nations, an executive council representing both the inhabitants of the city and foreign interests, with its own legislature and judiciary, with a special police force, of which the members should be recruited outside of Palestine, and with a special citizenship for all its inhabitants who elected to receive it. One of the functions of the Governor would be to preserve the holy places of all the communities and the religious buildings, and

maintain free access to them for all. The Trusteeship Council of the United Nations was to draw up and approve the detailed statute of the city; and the international administration would be responsible to it and give a yearly accounting. The Committee of the Council has completed its work of drawing up the statute but prudently did not fix any date for its coming into force. The detailed statute indeed already appeared to be a work of supererogation, an academic exercise. Before the plan could be referred to the Assembly, the Soviet Union, which had been largely instrumental in carrying the resolution for an international régime, announced that they were no longer in favour of that policy, since they had discovered—rather late in the day—that it was not in accord with the wishes of either of the two peoples mainly concerned.

The Jewish Agency for Palestine had accepted the decision of the Assembly, reluctantly indeed, but as part of the settlement. The Arabs at once fiercely repudiated it, and engaged in a determined effort by force to prevent a settlement on those lines. Attempts made by the British mandatory administration and the bodies of the United Nations, before the end of the mandate, to neutralize Jerusalem in the conflict which was already seen to be impending, completely failed; and as soon as the last British forces were withdrawn, on May 14, 1948, the city and the approaches to it became a main strategic objective of the Jewish—Arab war. The majority Jewish population was subjected for two months to a pitiless siege and bombardment, and the United Nations were unable or unwilling to intervene, except by the appointment of the late Count Folk Bernadotte as a mediator between the belligerents. The Synagogues in the Old City, the Hebrew University, and the Hadassah Hospital on Mount Scopus were shelled; and there were religious buildings on the Arab side of the line which suffered from the retaliation of the Israeli forces. It was only the faith and endurance of the Jewish population which saved them from destruction. The opportunity of executing the resolution of the United Nations, and setting up an international administration, which would assure the security of the city, its holy places and its inhabitants from acts of war, was lost by the vacillation and the pusillanimity of the Trusteeship Council and other organs of the United Nations, and the Jews became no less opposed than the Arabs to that solution. They had obtained during the struggle mastery of the greater part of the city outside the Walls, all the suburbs to the north, west and south; and except for a few hundreds, all the Arab inhabitants of these sections had fled.

The first step of the Israeli authorities to integrate Jerusalem into the State was to establish a military administration during the first cease-fire. Then in the autumn of 1948, after the second cease-fire,

when the command of Israel over the main road-approach to the city was greatly strengthened, the next step was to declare the application of the laws and regulations of the Republic to the whole area of Jewish occupation. During that same winter the transfer began of some departments of the Government to the city.

When the State was proclaimed in May 1948, in the midst of the chaos and anarchy of the last days of the British Administration, the provisional capital of Israel was fixed in a suburb of Tel-Aviv, which was formerly the German Templars' agricultural village of Sarona. It was renamed Hakiryá, meaning literally, the city; and the Ministries of the provisional Government took up their abode in the houses of the former German farmers. The provisional Council of Government—the legislature—found its temporary home in the Art Museum of Tel-Aviv. When, however, a constituent assembly was elected in January 1949, by a system of adult suffrage of all the inhabitants of Israel, Jew and Arab, and including the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the first meeting of the assembly, known by its Hebrew name of *Knesset*, was held in Jerusalem. It was the overwhelming feeling of the people that the first parliament of the nation must hold anyhow its first sitting in the historic capital; and it was in the hall of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in Jerusalem that Dr. Weizmann was elected President of the Republic.

The regular sittings of the Assembly during the rest of the year, however, were held in Tel-Aviv, in a cinema which was transformed into a dignified chamber. And the Government of Israel explained that the symbolic act in Jerusalem did not prejudice the decision of the United Nations about the future of the city. The third Assembly of the United Nations, by one of its last acts in December 1948, appointed a conciliation commission with the function of working out some international régime for the Jerusalem area. But when the application of Israel for admission to the United Nations was discussed before the Assembly in March 1949, the representative of Israel made it clear that the Jewish part of Jerusalem must be an integral part of the State:

When a law is promulgated in Israel, the Jews of Jerusalem obey it. When a tax is levied in Israel, the Jews of Jerusalem pay it. When Parliamentary institutions of Israel are elected, the Jews of Jerusalem help to elect them and participate in their operation. When litigation arises in Jerusalem, it is to the Courts of Israel alone that the Jews of Jerusalem take their case.

He might have added that the High Court of Israel, like the Supreme Court of Mandatory Palestine, had from the outset sat only in Jerusalem.

The coinage and stamps of Jewish Jerusalem are the coinage and stamps of Israel. The slowly reviving economy of Jerusalem is being sustained by the Government of Israel. The language, religion, cultural sentiment and national allegiance of

the Jews of Jerusalem are those which they hold in common with the State of Israel and its people.

Moreover, in the days of dire peril salvation came to the Jews of Jerusalem only from the State of Israel.

Every man, woman and child of Jewish Jerusalem to-day can ascribe the fact of his physical survival directly and completely to the State of Israel and its Government.

The conciliation commission published in August 1949 a draft instrument establishing a permanent international régime for the Jerusalem area. Their plan harked back in its main lines to the original proposals of the Assembly of 1947, and took scant account of the fundamental change of circumstances. It proposed not only a governor appointed by the United Nations but a general council consisting in equal numbers of Jewish and Arab representatives, special international tribunals, and a force of international guards, which should ensure the safety of the holy places and religious buildings and free access to them. The Government of Israel had previously declared to the United Nations its approval of the establishment of an international authority to be concerned with the control and protection of the holy places and sites, not only in Jerusalem but in other parts of the State ; and its willingness to offer safeguards and guarantees for the security of all religious institutions in the exercise of their functions. But it made clear immediately its opposition to the plan of the conciliation commission which it regarded as altogether unworkable.

In the summer of 1949 there was another symbolic action by the Government of Israel, to bring to Jerusalem from Vienna for re-burial the remains of the founder of modern Zionism, Dr. Theodor Herzl. They were laid to rest in a commanding site high above the Jewish suburbs ; and an announcement was made at the same time that the future buildings of the Zionist Congress and the other gatherings of the Jewish people in Israel should rise in that area of the city. Jerusalem should be visibly the centre of the Jewish people.

It was hoped that the Assembly of the United Nations in 1949, which had to consider the report of the conciliation commission, would adopt a modified proposal, to set up an international authority under the Trusteeship Council which would be concerned only with the holy places and the rights of the religious communities. That proposal, made by two smaller States, was believed to have the backing of the United Kingdom and the United States. At the last moment, however, a drastic resolution put forward by Australia, which went further than the draft scheme of the Commission in restoring the original project of 1947, for a *corpus separatum* of a greater Jerusalem, received more than a two-thirds majority of the delegations that voted. An anomalous alliance of the Latin States

of America, moved by the Vatican, of the Arab States actuated by their hostility both to Israel and to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and of the States of the eastern bloc dominated by the Soviet Union, brought about this unexpected and embarrassing result.

King Abdullah of Jordan, whose Arab Legion occupied the old walled city of Jerusalem and the eastern suburbs, had established his administration in the city, and proclaimed that the Arab section of Palestine, the Quadrilateral of the Judean and Samaritan plateaux, was joined to his kingdom. He was not less hostile to any proposal for the international government of Jerusalem, or any part of it, than to the Government and people of Israel. He announced that any attempt to impose such a system, and to take away the city from the Arab State, would be resisted with force. It was clear then that the resolution of the Assembly would not receive any support from the two peoples who were most concerned. The British representative at the Assembly also made it clear at once that Great Britain would take no part in implementing the resolution by force, just as she had refused to implement by force the original resolution of the Assembly in 1947 about the partition of Palestine into two States. She would endeavour to work for some solution acceptable to Arabs and Jews. So far as the United Nations Assembly were concerned, the last act was to refer the working out of the scheme to the Trusteeship Council.

On the side of Israel, there was no threat of violent resistance, but the most determined practical and moral opposition. The day after the resolution was passed, thousands of the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem, headed by the religious and the lay leaders of the people, gathered by the burial place of Herzl, and took a solemn oath in the words of the Bible : " If I forget thee, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning." A few days later, the Premier of Israel, Mr. David Ben Gurion, announced that Israel's Parliament, the *Knesset*, would be transferred from Hakirya to Jerusalem, and that most of the departments of the Government would straightway be transferred. In spite of all the difficulties in the truncated and war-devastated city, that operation was carried out in a few weeks. Only the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Office, which had to maintain its relations with external States—whose legations were centred in Tel-Aviv—remained in their former place. Meetings of the many parties of the Parliament were held in Jerusalem to affirm in brave words the determination of the people. And in its first session in Jerusalem the *Knesset* adopted a resolution on the status of Jerusalem, declaring that, with the creation of the Jewish State, Jerusalem again became its capital, and welcoming the announcement that the technical difficulties, which previously prevented the Government organs and the *Knesset* from moving to Jerusalem, have now been overcome. The opposition parties of the right proposed that a legislative act be

passed making Jerusalem the capital, and that this should be an article of the Constitution. The Prime Minister replied that no legislative act was required ; Jerusalem had been made the capital by King David.

In the meantime the Trusteeship Council has been struggling doggedly, at Geneva, to produce some plan of an international régime, out of the *damnosa hereditas* of the Assembly, which will have a possibility of acceptance both by the two nations in possession of Jerusalem and by the members of the United Nations. The French president of the Council, Monsieur Garreau, who holds office for the year, put forward a project for consideration by the meeting of the council in Geneva which, while maintaining the principle of a *corpus separatum*, went a long way to adopt the principle of limiting the authority of the United Nations to the holy places and religious sites. The greatest part of what is at present Jewish Jerusalem would remain in the State of Israel. The greatest part of what is to-day Arab Jerusalem would remain in the Arab State, including the holy Moslem area, the Haram, which comprises the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque of El Aksa. An area within the old city, in which the principal Christian holy places and religious buildings are gathered, a small area of Mount Zion outside the walls in which there are other Christian holy places, and the Mount of Olives and Mount Scopus where, besides Christian holy places, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem is situate, would be an enclave of the United Nations and under their special protection. A governor appointed by the United Nations, an international council, an international court of justice and an international police force would be established for this enclave. And the inhabitants of the city who wished it could claim citizenship of the international authority. That option might be exercised by members of the Christian religious orders, but by few others. In the scheme of the president of the Trusteeship Council there are other proposals difficult to realize. The whole area of Jerusalem, it is suggested, should be economically a free zone, and it should be demilitarized and neutralized. The plan as a whole would be tentative, to be tried out over a period of ten years, and thereafter the inhabitants would decide their future. It received a cold reception from the Members of the Council, and seems to have been abandoned. The Council has been since discussing laboriously a statute on the lines of the resolution.

The crux of the problem is to find a form of territorial sovereignty, or rather ex-territorial sovereignty, of the United Nations over any part of Jerusalem, in which both Israel and the Arab State would acquiesce. The problem is in some ways like that which was settled between the kingdom of Italy and the Pope of Rome by the Lateran Treaty recognizing the symbolic territorial sovereignty of the Pope

over the Vatican city. It is, however, immeasurably more complex, because, on the one hand, of the many conflicting interests of the members of the United Nations among themselves, and of the two parties most directly concerned, Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and because on the other hand of the scattered geographical distribution of the Christian holy places. Certain factors, however, must be assured for a solution by consent ; the reduction to a minimum of the limits of national sovereignty, the agreement of the great powers, and the agreement of Israel and Jordan.

Meanwhile the position of both Israel and Jordan has been strengthened (1) by the *de jure* recognition accorded by the British Government, at the end of April, to the State of Israel, and (2) by its *de facto* recognition of the present division of Jerusalem. That recognition is expressed to be subject to the ultimate decision of the United Nations ; but the indication is clear that there will be no more pressure on the two possessing States to give up their sovereignty.

Whatever be the outcome of the Herculean labour of the Trusteeship Council, the fixing of the capital of Israel in the Jewish part of Jerusalem is not likely to be disturbed. Faith, sentiment and will are a triple cord which binds the city with the Jewish people.

(Professor Bentwich has recently returned from a prolonged stay in Palestine.)

THE MERE

BY RUTH TOMALIN

White buttercups swam on the cressy mere ;
the slender heron stood
poised like a reed, and peaceful as a deer
treading anemones in a green wood :
over the sobbing mosses and clear springs
when the marsh country heard the snow geese pass
the green-veined April orchids spread their wings,
sorrel and rose and silver in the grass.

Slow flaxen lilies swayed on the faint tide ;
the willow warbler rang
a treble bell in June where withies sighed
and purple steeples of high orchids sprang :
under the wide white roads their relics lie,
drowned, with the bells and spires, their silver year—
lilies and fronds and weeds, the heron's cry,
the delicate wild children of the mere.

THE AGE OF LASKI

BY MAX BELOFF

GR^{EAT} teachers are very rare, and the modern university with its complex organization and increasing specialization of functions does not help to make them less so. The sudden and premature death of Professor Harold Laski was, above all, a loss to his profession and a source of intense personal grief to colleagues, students and ex-students all over the world. Few men of his ability have in our own times given so much of themselves to a single academic discipline ; and the establishment of politics as a proper subject of university study in this country owes more to Laski than to any other single individual.

It must be for those who knew Laski well, when time has softened the blow of their loss, to produce a balanced and definitive assessment of his career. What seems most worth doing at the moment is to attempt to solve a particular problem. Why is it that one feels so strongly that, despite Laski's great influence upon us all, his death marks the end of an era in the history of political thought in this country, that the lines upon which fruitful work will be done in the immediate future are lines upon which Laski himself had long ceased to travel ? It would not be too much to say that just as we can call the period 1840 to 1870 (from this point of view) the ' Age of John Stuart Mill ', so too the future historian may talk of the period between 1920 and 1950 as the ' Age of Laski '. In continuing the story after Mill's lifetime, one has to take new factors into account, and give room to the discussion of points of view that take their starting-point a long distance from Mill's own. It is equally likely that we are entering upon, or have already entered upon, an era when our major preoccupations will be quite different from those towards which Laski endeavoured to bend our attention, with all the compulsive mastery of his knowledge and eloquence. It is surely significant that Laski's last major work, *The American Democracy* (published in 1948) should have seemed above all, a very old-fashioned book, as though appearing a quarter of a century after its time.

There are of course two ways in which it might be said that we are passing into a new era. Of one of them, it is only necessary to speak briefly. In a brilliant and searching article entitled " Political Ideas in the Twentieth Century " (*Foreign Affairs*, April 1950), Mr. Isaiah

Berlin has justly observed that the most significant thing about the totalitarian political doctrines of our own era, is not the answers they give to the major philosophical questions about man and society that have for centuries preoccupied the minds of thinking men in all countries, but that they deny the importance of the questions themselves and the utility of asking them. The spirit of intellectual inquiry which has been the particular glory of our civilization is regarded by the Russian Communists as it was by the Nazis as something to be got rid of by annihilating the strong and conditioning the weak. To ask questions other than severely pragmatical ones is to show symptoms of psychic weakness ; what is required is not an answer, but treatment. In that sense, Laski even in his most pro-communist phase, was never in harmony with the new era. It is a part of his just title to fame that he never abandoned the appeal to reason, and never stopped asking the major theoretical questions implied by his studies—either in deference to someone's infallibility or because of the tepid indifference to ideas, as yet more common in Anglo-Saxon countries—the indifference which can reduce political science to the level of "who lays the drains and where?" Laski with an ever-keen social conscience knew well that for many people the impact of political decisions was just that ; but he never, even at his most earthbound, suggested that issues of principle were at any stage irrelevant, or that the ends of social activity are ever material in the narrow sense.

But assuming that we shall hold off the totalitarian challenge and that the study of politics will continue to be something in which the intellect may freely be engaged, it is still true, though in quite another way, that the 'Age of Laski' will be over. And curiously enough the reason for this is suggested by the popular and distorted version of Laski's rôle that was trotted out once again by the larger part of the British press on the morrow of his death. In the public mind, two things were remembered about him. The first was that he had been used by conservative propaganda in the 1945 election to symbolize some dark external compulsive power in whose hands any Labour Government would be a puppet. The second was that he had been accused during the campaign of advocating violent revolution, and had failed in a celebrated libel action to convince the court of the falsity of the charge.

To anyone who knew anything either of the Labour Party and its leaders, or of Laski, it was fantastic to endow him with even the non-sadistic attributes of a Himmler or a Beria. To regard as the partisan of bloody revolution a man who had spent a lifetime exploring the nature of democratic government, and endeavouring to suggest methods of remedying what he regarded as its surviving imperfections, was equally nonsensical. Yet even the grossest

caricature must have some substratum of fact to start the caricaturist on his work. There was a remote point at which the tracks of both these myths crossed the path of the real Laski.

The first is not germane to our present theme. But it is worth pointing out (and some future writer will no doubt elaborate it) that the election of 1945 was in a sense a triumph for Laski, not of course because he happened, accidentally almost, to be the party's chairman at that juncture, but because the Labour majority based upon massive working-class support, but extending well beyond this basis, and committed to a specifically socialist programme along with an extension of existing welfare services, represented precisely that social and ideological amalgam of which Laski had long been the leading intellectual exponent. The victory also proved the essential rightness of Laski's tactical foresight in supporting the whole-hearted participation of Labour in the wartime coalition in 1940 in defiance of the strict doctrines of pure Marxists.

The second myth—that of Laski as the violent revolutionary, the man of the barricades—represents the popular reaction to something more complex. Indeed it takes one to the very roots of his intellectual and moral dilemma. And this dilemma was not one personal to him, although it is in his writings that it is revealed most clearly. Just as the essential theme of all political speculation in the age of Mill, and of Tocqueville whom Laski so much admired, was the relation between the creative individual and the social pressure for conformity characteristic of all democracies, so for Laski's generation, the essential theme was the relation between the emancipation of the masses from what they regarded as the servitudes of capitalism, and their own inherited predilections for the democratic process. For Laski, liberalism as a doctrine might be indeed "effectively, a by-product of the effort of the middle-class to win its place in the sun" and now to be transcended, but he could hardly escape so easily from the liberal habit of mind, or repress in himself the liberal generosity of spirit. With a loyalty to the main body of the Labour Party, rare among the party's "intellectuals", he was yet prepared in his later years publicly to denounce in the name of wounded humanity, the bleak and uncomprehending hostility of Ernest Bevin and of the party's solid core to the persecuted remnants of European Jewry. And this surely not through some vague ancestral loyalty, but because of the same essential liberalism that twenty years after the Sacco-Vanzetti case could still inspire the indignant references in *The American Democracy*.

But before Laski in his *The Rise of European Liberalism* (published in 1936) came to employ the Marxist hatchet to cut away the roots of his own fundamental position, he had travelled far from his own intellectual origins. At the beginning, at the time when Justice

Holmes was describing him to Sir Frederick Pollock, as "one of the most learned men I ever saw of any age" and as "diabolically clever and omniscient," he seemed to have as the Justice observed, slightly sardonically, "a *spécialité* for Church history." Indeed, his *Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty* shows Laski in his twenties, as a brilliant disciple of Pollock's greater partner, Maitland. "Men have grown in the course of time," he wrote, "to love freedom and slavery has become a losing cause." And so he tried in an exploration of group loyalties in the past, religious and secular, to combat the harshness and intractability of Austinian sovereignty. But in that same year, 1917, a group of men seized power in "one sixth of the world"—men to whom slavery and freedom, as centuries of human experience had defined them, were altogether without meaning.

It has been suggested that Laski's turning away from his original "pluralism" to a totally different view of politics was a product of the Russian Revolution and of the new interest in Marx that it produced in the west. The watershed in his intellectual history is then held to be his little volume *Communism*, in the "Home University Library", which was published in April 1927. But it may be questioned whether any first-rate mind ever arrives at a new position by a route external to his own thought. In *Authority in the Modern State*, published in 1919, where Marx is mentioned only in order to point out that he has been displaced by Proudhon "as the guiding genius of French labour" one can already detect the signs of the transition. Already the emphasis on the group is passing from the religious to the economic sphere—Laski still writes of Churches but he feels with the trade-unions. It is the exercise of sovereignty by the capitalist State that is now condemned. "Labour," he writes, "could admit the complete sovereignty of the State only if it could be assumed that the State were on its side." At this juncture it is true that he still refuses to see salvation for the worker in the "simple formulae of a complete collectivism." He still hankers after a pluralistic and federal society based upon a balance of producer and consumer interests, he can still denounce the panacea of State-ownership—"to surrender to government officials not merely political but also industrial administration is to create a bureaucracy more powerful than the world has ever seen"—but the essential step has been taken. The social order must become what he preferred to call a "labour order" rather than a "socialist order". He meant by this, the progressive inclusion in the rights recognized by the State, of the rights that labour demands, as it becomes conscious of its rôle in the economic process. "No political democracy can be real," he wrote, "that is not as well the reflection of an economic democracy."

So far indeed, there seems on the surface to be no break with the extended liberalism of Laski's English predecessors. The crux was

that henceforth it was the displacement of capitalism rather than the extension of rights that took priority, and that from searching for a genuine meaning to give to "economic democracy", Laski passed to assuming that it could and should exist, and concentrating upon the obstacles to its attainment. Since it became progressively clearer that as far as the western world was concerned, the war of 1914 had not been capitalism's death warrant, the only safeguard for a man of Laski's way of thinking against the attractions of the Marxist form of Utopianism and the great Soviet illusion, remained his capacity for optimism. In 1919, he admitted that it was progressively less true that "government is exerted in the interests of those who control its exercise." But the optimism evaporated, and Utopianism took its place.

There can be little doubt that it was his belief in the strength and purposefulness of American capitalism that was a major cause of Laski's despairing of his original hopes of a progressive attainment of a pluralistic "economic democracy", with self-government in industry as its key. In ways undreamed of by Canning, the New World had come in to redress the balance of the Old. The American business-man had become the serpent in the democratic Eden. And he remained so to the end. Indeed there is in the whole story of Laski's intellectual career no more dramatic and tragic element than the tensions involved in his attitude to the United States. In the country where he passed some of the most fruitful years of his youth, where he first achieved recognition and where there existed precisely that absence of social inequality, that contempt for hereditary power and its manifestations, which were so cardinal to his thought, he seemed to find in later years only the symptoms of frustration. Even his admiration for Franklin Roosevelt could make him see in the New Deal little more than a reformist attempt to buttress the capitalist citadel. And in *The American Democracy* he was to picture the U.S.A. in terms that suggested that Calvin Coolidge was still in the White House, that ignored a quarter of a century of social progress and intellectual ferment, and that saddened, when they did not repel, those very groups in America who would so willingly have looked to him for inspiration in their task.

But the real centre of Laski's interests, intellectual and political, remained in England. And here perhaps, the decisive event was the collapse of the 1929-1931 Labour Government. It was after this point that Laski's pessimism about the possibility of Labour being allowed to achieve its ends by ordinary constitutional means became dominant in his writings. In his *Democracy in Crisis*, published in 1933, he still argues as he did throughout, that in a country like Britain, a socialist government must not lose the moral advantage that it would gain by acting within the traditional legal and consti-

tutional framework. The communist tactics of taking the offensive might result and probably would result, in countries with a strong middle-class, in a right-wing, rather than a left-wing dictatorship. But he was far from convinced that in the event of a Labour victory, the possessing classes would not themselves resort to open violence or sabotage. And rather than compromise on Socialism, a socialist government must in such a case, fight back.

It was arguments of this kind, appearing right down to the election of 1945 that made Laski so vulnerable to the charge of advocating violence. But this crude distortion hid the real weak point of his own argument, the fact that in accepting this version of the Marxist doctrine, he had altogether abandoned his earlier fruitful insistence on government by consent. Political pluralism was abandoned and a majority, provided it was a socialist majority, had the full right to proceed to the socialist transformation of society.

In *Democracy in Crisis*, Laski argued that even a communist dictatorship in England, would be "different" and would have to discover some wider basis of consent if it were to be durable. But this did not mean that for other countries, Laski condemned the Soviet model itself. At this period, and for a long time afterwards, Laski, like other intellectuals of the left found much to admire in the Soviet world. His essay in 1935 on "Law and Justice in Soviet Russia" probably marks the furthest point of his progress in this direction—a point at which he could in utter seriousness describe M. Andrei Vyshinsky a "a man whose passion was law reform." At the same time, the growth of Fascism and National-Socialism seemed to be bearing out his fundamental thesis elsewhere. So that by 1938, his *Parliamentary Government in England* both denies that non-socialists can really care for democracy, and blames the Labour Party for its refusal to co-operate with communists in a popular front.

The weakening of Laski's readiness to credit the good faith of communists dates of course, as with so many other people, from the Nazi-Soviet pact. But in 1943, in his *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* he could still place his hopes for the future on co-operation between the British and the Soviet brands of "Socialism", he could still hold that "there is nothing in the nature of the Bolshevik State which is alien from the democratic ideal" and still believe that the western countries would find it easier to co-operate with the Russians, if they were "progressive".

As Laski's view became steadily more directed towards the international aspects of politics in the post-war years, his views on the communists hardened :

The passion for conspiracy, the need for deception, the ruthlessness, the centralized and autocratic commands, the contempt for fair play, the willingness to use lying and treachery to discredit an opponent or to secure some desired end, complete

dishonesty in the presentation of facts, the habit of regarding temporary success as justifying any measure, the hysterical invective by which they wrought to destroy the character of anyone who disagreed with them ; these, in the context of an idolization of leaders, who might, the day after, be mercilessly attacked as the incarnation of evil, have been the normal behaviour of Communists, all over the world.

It was finely spoken. But by a breath-taking paradox, these lines appear in Laski's "Introduction" to the Labour Party's centenary edition of the Communist Manifesto. The perversions that Laski castigated were still, he held, the results of the application of Marxist principles to the specially difficult circumstances of Russia. Laski's own faith in these principles had seemingly, not wavered. The lessons that he drew for British Socialism were not seriously altered in 1948 from those he had drawn in 1938, and earlier.

It may seem fantastic, that a thinker of Laski's depth should never have asked himself whether the moral flaws that he detected among communists had not some relation to their doctrines, whether there was not in Marxism itself, in Marx himself, some enormous unseen philosophical flaw. There are signs that at the end, Laski was disquieted by one strand in the historical process that seemed to be going astray. In a pamphlet "Socialism as Internationalism" published by the Fabian Society in February 1949, Laski suddenly faced the fact that Socialism and socialists whether of the Soviet or the "democratic" variety were nowhere showing themselves internationally-minded. On the contrary. The "workers" in power showed the same narrow selfishness as had the capitalists, and were as ruthless in safeguarding their special interests through the machinery of the State. There is a nostalgic glint of the old Laski in his plea for "the separation of nation from State by means of functional federalism" as the best road he knew "to the erosion of sovereignty." What would Marx have made of that ?

We shall never know. Nor alas, shall we ever know what Laski would himself have made of it. But clearly nothing is answered by marrying Austinian sovereignty to the historical destiny of the proletariat. Clearly, political pluralism is still a vital need nationally as well as internationally. Clearly, the liberal impulse is not yet exhausted or explained away by the barbarous and puerile sophistries of Marxism. In approaching these formidable problems, it can be hoped that the post-Laski generation of political scientists may show the same eager curiosity as Laski did, the same capacity for work, and the same disinterested devotion to the pursuit of truth.

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SOCIAL POLICY AND THE WAR

BY A. F. WELLS

THE 1939-1945 war affected the civilian in an infinity of ways. For six years it was the dominant fact in his life ; every activity was in some way distorted by its influence. The preparation and conduct of a war often strike the reader of history as rather like a blindfold boxing match. One party, with an expression of anxiety, puts up a guard against a straight left while the other is preparing a tremendous right-hook which misses by feet. Something of that Alice in Wonderland atmosphere is conveyed by *Problems of Social Policy*.* The subject clearly could not be comprised in one volume, however concentrated, and Mr. Titmuss has not endeavoured to do so. Here he deals only with three topics : evacuation, hospital services and the care of the homeless. Studies dealing with problems of the family during the war are proposed for a further volume.

The sifting of evidence contained in "several million files in Government Departments in England, Wales and Scotland, the records of thousands of local authorities and voluntary agencies, and countless reports, surveys, books, journals and newspapers" (p. ix) is an enormous task from which the heart shrinks. Mr. Titmuss has performed the remarkable feat of making out of all this material a very clear and balanced narrative, fully documented and remarkably ballasted with facts and figures, yet sufficiently pointed and vivid to recall very forcibly one's own experiences as a civilian and civil defence worker. It is an essential book for all concerned with social psychology and the art of government.

The reader of such a book is strongly tempted to be wise after the event. Not that Mr. Titmuss falls into so obvious a snare. Clearly much could not have been foreseen. The Government of the time had to make the most elaborate and detailed plans for the protection of civilians in the event of war while being hampered by a complete ignorance of the effects of large scale bombing on towns ; by the fact that the enemy, being the aggressor, would always have the initiative, and, thirdly, by the fact that most of the public, even to the last days of peace, naturally wanted to persuade themselves that there

* *Problems of Social Policy : History of the Second World War*, by R. M. Titmuss. H.M.S.O. & Longmans. 25s.

would be no war. The Government's plans, it is well-known, were based on the expectation of mass obliteration raids from the very start. In March 1939 the Air Ministry thought that the possible weight of bomb attack might average seven hundred tons each day for the first fortnight. (In fact, only 70,995 tons fell on the United Kingdom during the whole period of the war.). It was also widely believed that air attack might continue for an indefinite period: "Day after day, and night after night, the capital of the Empire would be subjected to unremitting bombardment of a kind which no city effectively acting as the military, naval and administrative centre of a country engaged in a life and death struggle, has ever had to endure." (p. 5).

These official views seem to have been supported by most unofficial writers who dealt with the subject. Accordingly, the Government were wise in preparing for the worst, and in making as careful plans as possible for the evacuation of millions of persons from vulnerable areas and for the reception in hospitals of air raid casualties by the hundred thousand. Had they not done so they would have been gravely negligent. But, as Mr. Titmuss's study shows, it was these plans which, when expectations were falsified, contributed largely to the secondary ill effects of the war. "The theory of a 'knock-out blow' which the enemy would aim at the country's nerve centre influenced many of the early plans, and explained much of the birth and development of the war time emergency services." (p. 11).

Another factor which apparently influenced the Government is to us, with later events in mind, less easy to understand. "The contingency of wholesale neurosis and panic . . . was a possibility which was never far from the minds of the civil authorities when they considered the need for emergency services to provide for the social consequences of a war on civilians. It seems sometimes to have been accepted almost as a matter of course that widespread neurosis and panic would ensue." (pp. 17, 18). It is difficult, says Mr. Titmuss, to find even a hint that this fear of collapse in morale was based on much else than instinctive opinion. It may be suggested that it was contributed to by the considerable element of distrust between the Government and the governed in the years immediately before 1939. Again when bombing did arrive in the autumn of 1940 it found the people to some extent "battle-conditioned" and the country comparatively well prepared for defence. Had the attacks been of the weight expected and had they come at the time of Munich, unpleasant recollections of the state of mind at that time suggest that the Government's gloomy view might not have been wholly falsified. In any event, their view was again shared by responsible, non-official opinion. "In the middle of 1938 a number of eminent psychiatrists from the

London teaching hospitals and clinics formed a committee to consider the mental health services in time of war. A report was drawn up and presented to the Ministry of Health which envisaged a large and elaborate organization providing immediate treatment centres in the bombed areas, out-patient clinics running a twenty-four hour service on the outskirts of cities, special hospitals, camps and work settlements in safer areas, and mobile teams of psychiatrists and mobile child guidance clinics. It was suggested that psychiatric casualties might exceed physical casualties by three to one. This would have meant, on the basis of the Government's estimates of killed and wounded, some three to four million cases of acute panic, hysteria and other neurotic conditions during the first six months of air-attack. In September 1938, the medical director of one well-known London clinic thought that it was 'clear to everyone that there must be an immediate inundation with cases of neurosis on the declaration of war—and certainly after the first air-raid'." (pp. 19-20). These views led to the consideration of such expedients as the use of the army to control civil defence personnel and even the throwing of a police cordon round London (a suggestion made in 1931 by an evacuation sub-committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence).

While it rejected these, the Government—with such of the public as thought about the matter at all—were clearly expecting the dramatic: massacre and madness. On that assumption their over-riding duty was to clear as many people (at any rate of the more vulnerable or less needed) as possible out of the towns and to provide ample accommodation (coffins or beds) for the dead and wounded. Considerations of welfare that went beyond this seemed to many to be unnecessary refinements.

The expected consequences of air attack were, it is interesting to see, almost as catastrophic as the effects which we fear to-day from the atomic bomb. It is tempting to wonder to what extent they were the outcome of a guilty national conscience. In any event, although the Government had done what they could in some respects, in others they had fallen far short. The Government and the country were fully prepared neither for war nor for peace. The task of civil defence would have been very much simpler had it not been necessary to make social adjustments which should have been made long before the war. Had the Ministries been less neglectful of the poor and the working-class during the pre-war years, the preparation against air attack would have been far more efficient; for many of the social problems which arose during the first years of the war were the outcome of negligence and slovenly administration in peacetime. One of the most lamentable facts about the pre-war period (it is fully borne out by Mr. Titmuss's book) is the extent of official ignorance about important aspects of the condition of the country. One of

these, which had a direct bearing on the history of evacuation, was the condition of school children. It was generally believed at the time that the arrangements for sending off evacuees in September 1939 were, on the whole, successful. Mr. Titmuss endorses this view with reservations (one being that only about half the number arranged for actually went). But reception problems and difficulties, which led to the failure of the scheme, appear to have been completely unexpected. For example, the extent of head infestation among child evacuees caused horrified amazement. Now, there had been routine head inspections of school children by local education authorities for many years previously. The reported results of these inspections gave a far more optimistic impression than the facts revealed by evacuation warranted. "Without exception, so far as the writer is aware," says Mr. Titmuss, "the reports of local authorities for the large cities under-estimated the incidence and drew a self-satisfied and optimistic picture." (p. 130).

The children's clothing provided another shock. It was said that "quantities of clothing had to be burnt, that no change of clothing had been brought by the children, that footwear was cheap and shoddy, and even that some children arrived sewn into a piece of calico with a coat on top and no other clothes at all." (p. 115). The horror which accompanied these remarks was justified; but the consternation showed that the implications of widespread and long-standing unemployment had not been grasped by the general public. "It has been estimated," continues Mr. Titmuss, "that before the war there were about 4,000,000 families in Britain living from hand to mouth or from pay-day to pay-day. Of this number, one-half were continually in and out of debt. For all these families, the purchase of boots and clothing often meant a capital outlay beyond their immediate resources. Many of them, therefore had to buy cheap and generally shoddy equipment. Besides a widespread use of pawnbrokers, second-hand dealers and jumble sales, there grew up, partly in response to demand and partly because the housewives were easy to exploit, a vast instalment purchase organization—the clothing clubs of the poor" (p. 116)—institutions still unstudied by the sociologist. Ties such as these were among the numerous influences which led evacuated mothers to return home.

All this, the bulk of the middle class public appeared to be unaware of until after the evacuation movement. Yet social surveys of the poor had been made in England for the greater part of the previous half century, and particularly in the ten years before the war. It is true that most of these had been somewhat restricted in their scope; at the same time it is clear that they had aroused little interest among the general public. The Two Nations still existed in 1939. The importance of sociological field-work was increasingly realized

during the war, as it became evident that the whole country was in it together, and that what was happening was happening to everybody. The realization led, among other things, to the setting-up of the Wartime Social Survey organization, a section of the Ministry of Information. Activities of this kind are not dealt with by Mr. Titmuss ; presumably they will be treated in another volume of the series.

The same condition of almost wilful ignorance was shown in relation to the pre-war state of the hospital services. When, as a part of civil defence planning, the Government needed to estimate the available hospital accommodation, it was found that necessary information was lacking. "Very little was known, for instance, about conditions in voluntary hospitals. . . . Nearly 200 out of approximately 1,030 of these hospitals did not even furnish *The Hospitals Year Book* for 1939 with elementary information." (pp. 64-5). Records were badly kept. The standard of poor law hospitals was often very low : a departmental survey of public assistance institutions in a county within fifty miles of London described them just before the war as "pest-houses". "Of twenty-one institutions for the chronic sick existing on the eve of war in South Wales and Monmouthshire, nine were over one hundred years old, eight over fifty years, two more than forty years old, while the remaining two were put up in 1904 and 1908. All were built as workhouses for paupers. The surveyors (of the hospitals in this area) classified all hospitals (voluntary and municipal, but excluding tuberculosis and mental institutions) and found that, out of a total of 7,945 beds, 3,855—or nearly one-half—were in premises graded as totally unfit to be used as hospitals." (p. 70). The amount of re-equipment and re-conditioning of hospitals which was found necessary during the war imposed a considerable strain on the country's resources when they could badly bear it.

If you expect war prepare for peace. It was realized too late how both manpower and social services had been neglected in the period before the war ; a time when they ought to have been brought to the highest state of efficiency. This aspect of the matter had made no real impression on the Government. It is horrifying to think what the results might have been. As it happened, the country was afforded the opportunity of putting right its mistakes. A vast amount of zeal was devoted to this ; it could have been used to much greater advantage. The fact that all parties now announce support of the National Health Service and the policy of full employment merely means that mankind always buys its experience at too high a price.

Mr. Titmuss gives arguments to show that one of the contributing causes why evacuation was relatively a failure lay in the strength of

family and local ties. One defect of pre-war Governmental planning was the inability to realize the importance of such ties in the formation of a spiritually strong community. The evidence suggests to the reader that the Government at the beginning of the war tended, consciously or unconsciously, to look on the civilian community in a military or a poor law spirit—to regard them as a crowd of “bods” rather than as persons with wills and aspirations and spiritual links with the rest of their community. This helped to founder the evacuation scheme, for people would not stay evacuated; which, in the circumstances of the war, was all to the good. “The principal enemy of evacuation was the solidarity of family life among the mass of the people” (p. 180). This feeling of solidarity rejected the sudden break which evacuation made with familiar habits of living. Contrasts of family standards and outlook were sometimes pathetic. Mr. Titmuss tells a story of two children, billeted in the county of Dumfries, who were sent to a comfortable bed with clean white sheets. “When the householder went mother-like to see them in bed she found both children huddled in a corner of the room. ‘We’re no’ goin’ there,’ they said, pointing, ‘that’s a bed for the deid folk.’” (p. 180). Conflicting loyalties troubled the young evacuee in situations where differences such as these were sharply marked. Mr. Titmuss suggests that “among the young this may have been simply an expression of love and a desire to keep alive memories of home; with older children it was simultaneously an expression of a refusal to be unfaithful to their parents’ standards.” (p. 181). The evacuation movement was unsuccessful because it again neglected considerations which, in the event, proved all-important: in this case, the desire to feel oneself part of a group. Therefore the fact that so many went home may have given them the strength to see the war through. “Life had meaning . . . in the environment they knew so well. In a billet in the country it lost its meaning. They understood Mr. Churchill and the *Luftwaffe* among their own people, and in their homes, not in somebody else’s. And so they went home.” (p. 182).

Anything which helped to strengthen family and group spirit was good. It will probably come to be felt that the worst effect of the war lay in its mental and physical deracination of the young. In Britain their bodies suffered comparatively little; the effect, however, of the disintegration of the home owing to calling-up of fathers, absence of mothers on war-work, evacuation, bombing of houses and closing of schools, is impossible to measure. But while these must be contributing largely to post-war juvenile delinquency, the effects, direct and indirect, of the previous decade of large-scale long-standing unemployment with consequent physical and mental squalor and disorder must not be overlooked.

Children—and old people too—suffered in some ways which can be confidently identified as secondary effects of the war. Mr. Titmuss produces interesting statistics showing increases during the war years in the death rates for certain classes of accidents. While the death rate from road accidents, for instance, fell considerably among adults during 1940-1943, many more children were killed—a result of less schooling and supervision. But, on the whole, apart from obvious slaughter, the effects of the war on civilian life and mind are not yet fully apparent and will be difficult to disentangle from the effects of expectations of future prosperity or war.

It is no impediment to zeal but rather a stimulus to realize that the history of societies is continuous, and that their state at one moment is affected by all their past. Thus child-health during the 1939-1945 war showed little overall deterioration, partly because mothers bearing children during the war came themselves of better physical stock than previous mothers. The social progress of the previous thirty years was gradual and left much still undone ; but at any rate it produced some fruits when they were badly needed.

(Mr. A. F. Wells is the author of The Local Social Survey in Great Britain.)

THE LAST DAYS OF PAPEY

BY RAYNER S. UNWIN

THE island of Papey lies some three or four miles off the east coast of Iceland. It is not large, a mile square perhaps, but it has grazing enough for a hundred or two sheep. Its rocky cliffs and surrounding islets are the haunt of innumerable nesting sea birds ; but it is best known to sailors, for its lighthouse is often the first landfall on the Icelandic coast that a ship from the east will make. Papey was probably the first inhabited land in Iceland. A century before Ingolfur Arnason, the first Viking settler, landed at Reykjavik in the year 874, Irish hermit monks had crossed the seas in fragile coracles, still used by the Blasket islanders of south-west Ireland, and, as was their custom, established their lonely cells upon islands round the Atlantic coast. Pap-ey or Priests' Island was one such place, but little besides the name and the tradition remains to record their sojourn. They left, according to report, as suddenly as they had arrived, owing to the heathen ways of their new neighbours the Vikings. Papey is an untouched field for the archaeologist. A single wooden crucifix has been found and ascribed to this period, and an inland cave is reputed to have been their dwelling. There are also in one or two places traces of circles on the ground which may well be from the beehive huts which they used to build. Strange lights have been seen near one of these sites and on one stormy night early this century, men from the mainland manned their boats and struggled in terrible seas to reach the island thinking the farm buildings were on fire. When they reached the harbour there was darkness and nothing to be seen.

Since early days Papey has always been inhabited. The solitary farm is a good one with a large tun, or homefield, from which hay was being gathered while I was there. Allowing for the vagaries of a farming life it is a prosperous community, but it is incredibly isolated. To reach the nearest point on the mainland requires three days of strenuous travel by bus from Reykjavik, the capital, and a lost connection means a week's delay. From the mainland to the island requires a special boat to be chartered and in rough weather this is impossible ; so, apart from the telephone by which weather reports are sent twice daily to the shore the island is absolutely cut off, often

for weeks on end. Few people nowadays are willing to live under the privations of such isolation, and the farm requires two able-bodied men and two women to run it. The old farmer died and only one son was left and now, although the family desperately wished to remain, the island must be left, unsaleable, and abandoned for the winds to play with. (My signature in the lighthouse book, the two-hundredth since 1922, may well be the last.) Nevertheless work on the farm was being performed meticulously ; the homefield was extended, although no-one will reap the benefits, and repairs were carried out that might well have been left.

Papey is not new to calamities. In the seventeenth century Turkish pirates harried the Icelandic coasts, capturing slaves and looting as they went. They landed on Papey, burnt down the farm, carried off the inhabitants and killed those who were too old or too young. Only two men escaped ; they ran towards the high cliffs that front the sea and appeared to jump over the edge. In fact they clambered down a spine of rock into a small cave half way down where they sheltered for 24 hours until the marauders had departed.

Although the farm has always been on the same site, the present buildings of corrugated iron with banked turf outbuildings are only 50 years old, and the wholly turf dwellings that preceded them had to be renewed every generation. But the community has always been self-sufficient. From the mainland they buy flour, coffee, sugar and a little oil. Everything else they can make themselves. They knit their own clothes with wool from their own sheep. Their cows supply milk and butter, the sea yields them fish when they need it and, during lucky summers, shark and seal. They have a church, the smallest in Iceland, a tiny corrugated iron box held down by chains ; but nowadays no pastor visits it and although the family is deeply religious they consider it no crime to use the church for storing their spare furniture, their best clothes, and for pinning out the skins of the seals they catch. Under the church there is said to be buried treasure and a fortune teller has predicted that it will soon be found. There is, however, no sign of it yet. But it is the seabirds that provide the farm on Papey with its greatest source of livelihood. The eider duck nests on the island and the down is carefully collected, separated from the moss and grass which help to make up the nest, and sold ashore. Puffins are netted in prodigious butterfly nets and young puffins are dug from their burrows. Last year the women on the farm plucked 8,000 puffins, young and old ; for weeks they had been eating puffin every day, and an excellent food it is if properly cooked. The puffin season was nearing its end when I was there and young fulmars were also being taken for food, but there was no sign of a diminution in the enormous numbers of seabirds that inhabit the island. The place itself seems to flutter with their wings and even

by night the terns keep up a sleepless altercation above their nesting colonies.

Not only is the farm royally self-supporting during the summer, but when winter sets in with its almost endless night there is plenty of salt fish and meat with perhaps a few potatoes or rhubarb left for vegetables; and afterwards a bowl of skier, a traditional dish made from sour milk. There is light indoors during these dark weeks from the windmills of their own generating plant and there is always a variety of less active work to do; carding eider down or wool, fashioning out of wood that has been cast up by the sea anything from a windlass for hauling the motor-boat up the beach to a new handle for the kitchen door; or feeding hay to the sheep in their turf and stone shelters. But the weather during the long winter months is often wild and tempestuous; the island is curtained in spray and the waves cast great stones over the cliff tops on to the yellow grassland. It is a battle against the wind to reach the constantly flashing beacon in its high house and tend the light.

It was during such a winter storm a few years ago that a mine exploded against the coast sending splinters of metal all over the island and chipping the wall of the lighthouse itself. Another mine which drifted in calmer weather into the mouth of the anchorage was secured by the farmer's son, single-handed in a rowing boat. These were not the only mines to reach Papey, whose coast intercepts much flotsam from the northern seas. During the 1914-1918 war a mine was washed ashore and the farmer, not knowing what it was, tethered his horse to one of its horns; luckily it did not explode.

Last year the farmer, then an old man, died and was buried like his forbears in an unmarked grave by the side of the little church. He was a great character, and his fame spread far beyond the little island of Papey. One incident I remember was when he sold a cow to a farmer on the mainland. The price was agreed but when the boat in which the cow was transported arrived it was found to be closely followed by another containing the gratuitous addition of enough hay to keep the cow during the winter. Like his wife, who has not left the island for ten years, the old man had little desire to wander from his farm. This spirit his son, Snorri, has largely inherited. While I was staying on Papey Snorri took a holiday on the mainland. He did not go far, as he considered a town of any size to be unpleasant. He chose rather to exchange one isolation for another and spent his three days rest on a farm not far off. He enjoyed himself immensely and to crown his pleasure there had been a dance, or "ball" as he called it, at the adjoining hamlet. "It was a great success," he confided later, "although I was too busy to go to it myself." But Snorri returned to Papey without regret, for there was much to do, its very diversity making the life attractive to him. A glance at the equip-

ment inside one of the innumerable outhouses was proof of that. A row of large barrels stood against one wall. In the first of these were puffins, kept fresh in layers of loose feathers while waiting to be plucked. The next two contained sharks' liver in salt and in the bottom of the last barrel were lumps of seal meat, rancid and maggotty the best bait when shark fishing. Against the opposite wall rested the carding machine for eider down, nearly hidden by bags of the down itself, grey, soft, and almost inextricably mixed with dry moss and grass. A seal skin had been thrown stiffly and carelessly into a corner; against it leaned the only gun on the island, rusty with age. On a rack overhead rested a medley of implements; hay-rakes, thin-blade oars for the rowing boat, puffin nets and nooses on long poles used for catching the young fulmars which spit a foul-smelling orange excrement when too nearly approached. The remaining floor space was occupied by a jumble of floats for fishing nets, a sea-anchor, coils of rope for descending the cliffs during the egg-collecting season and some sacks of dried sheeps' dung, the staple fuel for the house during the winter. The roof of the shed was of turf supported by wooden beams. Like all turf roofs it was completely waterproof, but it needed frequent repairing because cows in search of grazing sometimes walked up the roof and fell through. The roofs of the sheds nearest to the farm were often incorporated in the tun and scythed for hay.

It is such providence over details that has brought Papey to its short-lived prosperity. Nothing is wasted or despised. A handful of wool picked up among the tufts of thrift and cotton grass in the centre of the island will be carefully brought home. Two men with a rope will go out to retrieve a packing-case from the sea below the cliffs. It seems to me a tragedy that for lack of one strong man such thrift must give place to the negligence of nature. Within a year of the evacuation of the island the homefield will have reverted into moorland, the wind and the rain will have battered the house into a ruin, and strangers will come at will to rob the nests. When this happens Papey will once again be as it was when the Irish priests first landed on its shores more than a thousand years ago, a desolate and uninhabited island indistinguishable from a thousand others that flank the coast lines of the world.

(After leaving Oxford, the author spent a month in Iceland before going to Harvard for post graduate work.)

SIDNEY'S LOVE

BY RICHARD CHURCH

Is it not sad to think
Of Penelope Devereux,
Child-love, as it were,
Of a man whose word and act
Will never be forgotten
Till time itself shall sink
With fable and with fact,
Finally confused and rotten
In the sedimentary floor
Of earth bereaved and bare
Even of its cloak of air,
And mankind is no more ?

He met her, we are told,
When she was twelve years old,
A touzled little thing
With hair a fiery red ;
But a voice which even then,
Were she induced to sing,
Would make men drop their swords
And clinking cups, to listen.
Such is man's thrall to words,
Especially when they fasten
Their magic to the sound
Of a human throat endowed
By some freak will of the gods
With music never found
In the rest, the speaking clods
Who fill Court, Theatre, Church,
Nor know that what they touch
With verbiage, they smirch.

Also he heard her laughter.
Through the halls of Kenilworth
It suddenly would break
Bounds, piercing decorum through

With innocence and mirth,
That happiness which hovers
On the brink of knowledge, when
Still undeclared as lovers,
Hesitant girls and men
Shun love, for love's own sake ;
To succumb the moment after.

" Biting my truant pen ",
Sir Philip Sidney wrote,
" Beating myself for spite "
—This in a perfect sonnet—
He stared at that singing throat,
And knew that if he won it
He were blind from too much light.

As for the child, she felt
The magnet in his eye.
The spirit in her knelt.
Her soul was prepared to die,
If souls *can* die, to give
That recognition scope
To cling, and clinging, live,
And living, feed on hope.

Neither dared speak, the Queen
And a shallow-hearted brother,
—But not too shallow to hate—
All-powerful at that time,
Were watching. And once seen
By that sovereign, golden eye,
Who knows what the crime
And punishment had been ?
Sir Philip, foreshadowing fate,
Let pass the cup to another.

PLAYS IN ENGLISH PROSE ?

BY DAVID HIGHAM

“THE reappearance of the poet in the English theatre is a heartening feature of the times in which we live.” So opens an advertisement for the published plays of Christopher Fry, one of the small number of writers of plays in verse who has appeared since *Murder in the Cathedral* showed the way a dozen years ago. Lower down, Mr. Fry’s “rich, rumbustious language” is commended and then we read “The speed, the vigour, the humour, the flicker of *The Lady’s Not for Burning* and *A Phoenix Too Frequent* offer something to the modern playgoer which has been absent from our stage since the seventeenth century.” Speed, vigour, humour, flicker—all, in effect, qualities of language—are not these attributes of, say, *Decline and Fall* or *The Loved One* ? And richness of *The Heat of the Day* ; or, in another sense of the word, of Sir Osbert Sitwell’s novels ? The qualities quoted are certainly those of good prose no less than of good verse. Yet when we look for the plays whose prose is to rank with that of the novels quoted, we cannot find them.

Let us first be thankful for the verse plays. The very use of the verse medium implies an understanding that a care for language is indispensable if a play is to be more than ephemeral, for no play has survived without what we must call literary quality, though that quality by itself is not enough. And, given a lead by T. S. Eliot, a famous field has been re-explored by talents as diverse as those of W. H. Auden, Christopher Isherwood, Stephen Spender, Ronald Duncan, Christopher Fry and Norman Nicholson. Mr. Eliot’s experiments and his discoveries have been so far the most interesting and important : and, in particular, *The Family Reunion* does solve one of the greatest difficulties the modern verse-playwright seems to face—of assimilating the verse-medium and the modern setting. Most of his fellows have avoided this crux by choosing settings in the past or, as Norman Nicholson in *The Old Man of the Mountains*, by using no more than a modern disguise. This in no way invalidates their plays for us, any more than we should hold a modern epic poem to be diminished if its story and setting were medieval. But a modern epic would almost certainly take the form of a prose novel. Is then the verse-play the only answer that can be made to the charge that

the values of literature, of which drama is a part, have disappeared from the English stage ?

Edmund Wilson in *The Triple Thinkers* makes a distinction between prose and verse, on the one hand, and poetry on the other. Prose and verse "are simply two different techniques of literary expression." The choice of medium has, over a wide range of matter, differed at different periods. Much that was written in verse in Elizabethan times, for instance, is to-day written in prose. If D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf had lived a century earlier, would they not both most probably have written their novels in verse ? And when Elizabeth Bowen, in her *Notes on Writing a Novel*, comes to state what the object of a novel is, it is "the non-poetic statement of a poetic truth." (In an age in which the epic poem in verse is virtually extinct, I take her "non-poetic" to be opposed to "lyric" : and so to be equivalent to prose as opposed to "verse".) The whole history of the modern novel upholds her.

The statement of a poetic truth is as proper an object for a prose as for a verse technique—the choice will go by the author's feeling about the particular statement he wishes to make. The Edmund Wilson of "Is Verse a Dying Technique ?" (an essay written before 1939) seems to think the verse-technique unseasonable to-day for a long work of fiction, though the work done for the stage since 1939 is evidence against him and, in the sphere of what is now called the novel, we have W. H. Auden's *Age of Anxiety*. Edmund Wilson has not claimed a decline in the technique of verse, but the development of prose technique in the sphere of imaginative writing.

Novels and plays are alike works of fiction ; and while the same subject can rarely if ever be presented equally well in both forms, yet the same poetic truths certainly can. It is thus a question of the most suitable form or technique for the presentation of the given poetic truth which determines whether a work is to be for the stage or the study. Yet the English prose novel has developed into so remarkable and varied an instrument for conveying poetic truth, while the prose play has in that regard fallen far behind.

When the modern stage began in Elizabethan times, it had a monopoly of fiction, for the novel was unknown. It was quickly established that the medium for serious work was verse, prose being used for comic passages only or for farces and rustic stuff. The Restoration brought in sophisticated comedy ; but the "serious" play—then still the tragedy—was written in verse. This dichotomy continued throughout the eighteenth century, despite the decline in the quality of the verse play and despite the appearance of the novel. The waxing power of prose in fiction showed itself on the stage only in comedy, which besides could claim a closer ancestry in the Restoration prose dramatists. Even so, only Goldsmith and Sheridan have

survived from this period. Their verse-writing fellow-playwrights are to-day unread and unacted. By Victorian times verse had faded from the stage, but the prose plays that took it over proved to be feeble stuff. The theatre had clung too long to traditions that were dead ; important writers had ceased to look upon it as a means of communication. Between Sheridan and George Bernard Shaw it was given over to the hacks.

Yet this same Sheridan to Shaw period brought forth great writers of fiction, in prose and in verse, though the territory of the prose writers was still generally limited to entertainment—it would almost be fair to say amusement. The subjects—the poetic truths—that novelists from James on were to deal with were still in the hands of the authors of *Endymion*, *Aurora Leigh*, *Idylls of the King*, *The Ring and the Book*, even *Don Juan*. There were a few exceptions—*Wuthering Heights*, *Moby Dick*—but these were so far out of the main trend as to be prophetic rather than symptomatic or immediately influential. And the verse-writers were still occasionally attempting the play-form, though without success because there was no living stage to write for and they had not understood the need to create one by inventing fresh forms.

At this point the situation in Europe generally was not so different. But by 1850 or so it was beginning to change there; by the 'eighties that change was profoundly affecting the stage. Stendhal had published *Le Rouge et Le Noir* in 1831 and was dead by 1842. The other great Frenchmen followed him, the great Russians, too, all taking over into prose the expression of poetic truth hitherto reserved for verse. But translation was slow ; and it is not until James appears in the 'seventies and 'eighties (with little material success) that the novel in English begins to follow suit. Even when it does, the theatre is at first quite unaffected and then, by a series of accidents, diverted.

Ibsen, beginning with verse-plays but quickly turning to and sticking to prose, does not reach England until the very late 'eighties, contemporary with and—this is of some importance—sponsored by Bernard Shaw the social propagandist author of *Widowers' Houses*. Bernard Shaw fights for Ibsen valiantly, but puts the emphasis on the social reformist effect of the plays. Ibsen's exposition of character and of the tragedy of the human situation resulting from conflict of character and environment go for much less than they should, being indeed the core of his work. And so does Ibsen's prose, veiled by Archer's pedestrian English, through which the salient points of action loom, leaving the rest obscured. All the direct beauty of sound in rhythm, vowels, consonants, is of necessity gone and with it much help for the actors. But so, too, one feels sure, are the overtones that build up significance, that play on the audience's

memory and half-memory of what has gone before or on the associations which words in a language have for those who speak it. Ibsen's stage symbolism, which in English comes through sometimes so crudely, must be particularly weakened by translation, but especially by a translator who does not appear to have conceived poetry as an element in a prose play.

George Bernard Shaw, however, can write prose for the stage as well as we feel sure—and are told by Norwegians—Ibsen can. With that weapon, and dragging Ibsen by the hand, he launches his attack on the English theatre which, by the 'nineties, has become a mixture of the trivial and the artificial, lit only by the wit and comedy in Wilde's few plays (which in their serious passages are as absurd as anyone else's). The artificial, at least, is ripe for destruction and it collapses before the attack of the social reform batteries. To the artificial is then opposed the real—but in terms, alas, not of poetic truth but of social reform. Forward the problem play ; and from there it is not far to "realism", a kind of fiction of which a good deal was by now appearing in novel form. Realism, with its technique of using naturalistic transcription of everyday speech for its dialogue, has held the stage ever since, growing duller and feebler and ever less capable of conveying poetic truth.

But what happened, then, to Bernard Shaw, who has been writing ever since the 'nineties and whose powers as a dramatist have only lately waned ? Why, when his plays are both excellent and successful has he had so little influence on other dramatists since his first sharp impact ? The answer lies in his reaction to Ibsen already stated. His interest lay originally in social reform and from there quickly reached out to intellectual and moral ideas. But to character and the situation of human individuals, no. He is no creator of character ; he sets before us human points of view. (Compare *Candida*, perhaps his nearest to a complete person, originally created, with Madame Ranevsky in *The Cherry Orchard*). What he has given us is a series of superb debates in dramatic prose. In doing so he has set up for himself an imposing monument beside the main highway of the drama. All dramatists will doff their caps to him as they pass on their way to the larger world beyond, noting however that it is his command of the art of dramatic prose that will yet preserve his work when the content of his debates may seem to his hearers irrelevant.

After Bernard Shaw, but not out of him, came another movement, the Abbey Theatre, which had its own triumphs in its day but which left small mark on the prose play. Synge and Lady Gregory contrived a splendid language in which to convey poetic truth—a language close akin in some ways to verse itself. But the language itself was no more than nominally English and quite unusable by a playwright not himself Irish and even in the movement. Sean

O'Casey, who followed at the Abbey, derives from a different impulse, using in his earlier satisfactory plays a language based on what he himself had known and spoken. This is another vivid speech, but again not open to others. Denis Johnston has come nearest to making use of speech which retains the edge and power of a local idiom without losing the accumulated riches of the English language.

But if major names are missing, the achievement of the theatre of Galsworthy, the Lancashire school, Granville Barker and their successors is still a solid one. They have at least restored the theatre as a place to which serious people might resort. If the hungry sheep looked up and were not full-fed, at least there were sheep and not merely goats. For a good many years the novelty of what was offered was enough to create the illusion that major plays were being written. And yet each revival makes it more obvious that the qualities for survival are not there. Earnestness and a sense of effective "theatre" is not enough. Imagination is lacking, the grasp of the eternal in life, above all the style, to carry them over beyond the period in which they were written. The naturalistic convention which they followed is a severe handicap, for its attraction at the time lay chiefly in giving the illusion of actuality—that the audience was seeing and hearing people it might leave the theatre and meet next day. To achieve this illusion, the theatre's other and more potent illusions were sacrificed. And to-day we are left not with works of art, but with transcripts of conversations and records of fact in dramatic form.

Now style can be no more than a mirror of content ; it cannot reflect what is not there. But a style of dialogue which takes it as an over-riding requirement that all speech should directly imitate that of everyday life puts itself at an unnecessary disadvantage. It confines the power of prose within very narrow limits ; it shuts out verse entirely. It reduces the sword of words to the prick of a hatpin. Yet words are the dramatist's main weapon, words which exactly reflect what the dramatist has to convey.

Words alone are not enough to make a good play : or a good novel, as the later George Moore shows. But they are an essential without which the rest is unavailing. The stage has its own technique. as many a novelist has found, notably Henry James. Yet what a good play came out of *Washington Square* when skilled dramatic technicians were joined to James's literary qualities to express James's poetic truth in dramatic form, with the strong aid of James's own dialogue. The mention of poetic truth reminds how closely Miss Bowen's *Notes on Writing a Novel* are applicable to writing a play, above all the section headed "Dialogue".

Yet side by side with a theatre whose best expression ignored the uses of style and language, the novelists, first led and then inspired by

James, and basing their work on those very qualities, had set out to extend the range and depth of their branch of prose fiction. James himself, Lawrence, Conrad, Joyce, Woolf, Graham Greene, Henry Green, Evelyn Waugh, Elizabeth Bowen—that is naming only some. Who in the theatre could we set beside them but those whom we have already seen as beside, rather than on, the main road ? Somerset Maugham has written no play of the quality of *Cakes and Ale* : when he writes plays, they are, he says, purely for entertainment. So, one would have thought, was *Cakes and Ale*, yet that short book has at once a style and careful art that puts it far above, say, *Our Betters*. Mr. Maugham seems to be of the strange school which will not admit subtlety to the theatre, as if *Hamlet* and *The Cherry Orchard* lacked it. J. B. Priestley's style is too commonplace, Noel Coward's and Terence Rattigan's are too shallow, for the statement of poetic truths, an object with which the last two seem rarely to be concerned. Not so J. B. Priestley; and fails repeatedly for lack of feeling for words. But the great means of subtlety in the theatre is language. The one practising playwright who seems to know this is James Bridie, whose language and style often carry him when other qualities fail. A younger man, Peter Ustinov, approaches the same knowledge from the actor's angle.

And language : the style which it expresses is one thing that writers in a foreign language can hardly give us, especially on the stage, where the language is spoken speech, with all its intricate and subtle suggestions of type, class and character to be conveyed. In a translation, however good, such fine points must be blurred ; and the three most important foreign playwrights wrote in Norwegian, Swedish and Russian respectively. Our own playwrights have thus known them only through translations, and Strindberg as well as Ibsen is notoriously ill-rendered. But even the Constance Garnett Chekov versions hardly leave us feeling that we know how Chekov really wrote. The smudge of translation over foreign masterpieces has taken the attention away from the style and the language : and left English playwrights so disregarding these qualities in their own work that by the 'thirties a clamour for, at any rate, language had arisen. This the poets have set out to try and still.

The clamour was of course not at bottom for language, but for the ideas—the poetic truths—that need and command language to express them. With the range of the modern novel in mind, surely a technique of prose can be found which will be on the stage as subtle and as moving as it can be in a novel ?

It must of course be a technique of spoken prose—of dialogue. It will be for the ear rather than the eye ; and this will open the range of sound and rhythm. The affinity of the stage with music will be emphasized. A play will be seen to require the employment of

contrasted instruments—voices ; appropriate sets of sounds and rhythms will have to be devised for those voices. Yet all must be woven into one over-riding pattern of meaning, the sounds and the dynamics and tempi too, reinforcing and developing the pattern. It may be harder for the playwright than the composer, for the playwright's sounds have the additional significance of being the currency of our daily lives. But the familiarity of his medium will help him to satisfy those who can take only his outward meaning while also conveying the deeper intentions. He can operate successfully at several levels, as we can see that the great plays have operated, from Shakespeare on ; and as some great music has. Shakespeare did this in the verse medium ; but to-day the medium of prose has been so developed that it is ready now for use in just such a way. It is subtle and flexible enough to convey mood, and that through the mouths of diverse characters, types and classes, within one play. It is now an instrument of precision. And prose on the stage needs precision no less than verse, if it is to convey poetic truths.

Does the use of prose in this full way mean an end of " naturalistic " plays, plays in which " real " people appear in the situations of life ? I do not think so. It is a matter of what people in a theatre will suspend their disbelief of ; and that is much. They cannot turn back to the earlier pages, cannot put the book down to reflect, though they may reflect afterwards. But by then, they can reflect only on the totality of what they have heard and seen : the test will be the total effect of the play. (Chekov is the extreme example here—a writer whose effect is gained by a whole made up of parts that taken one by one often appear to have little significance, though we must reckon that without a real knowledge of Chekov's language.)

Much will depend on the skill of the opening : but, to combat any unfamiliarity (which not all of an audience will rebel at) the full powers of language and of a uniform style will come into action. What has been achieved in *The Family Reunion* in verse should surely not be beyond a prose that can give us such diversity as in *The Heart of the Matter*, *Decline and Fall* and *The Heat of the Day*.

THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

BIG SHIPS AND SMALL

BY ADMIRAL ROBERT N. BAX, C.B.

THE convoy system, which was a revival from the old eighteenth century wars, saved Britain in the 1914-1918 war and enabled us to weather the storm again from 1939 to 1945. Japan, another island empire like ourselves, and dependent on the import of oil, rubber and raw materials had her trade strangled by American submarines by the time the attack on Okinawa was launched. When invasion of Japan herself was undertaken her fleet was immobilized for lack of fuel and her aircraft unable to leave the ground.

An outstanding feature of the war was the development of amphibious operations, carried out in all quarters of the globe, mostly over vast distances, and often on a momentous scale. The war in the Pacific is an epic in itself. America recovered from the treacherous attack on her fleet in Pearl Harbour in time to arrest the Japanese advance in the Solomons and New Guinea. She created a new technique in naval warfare for the conquest of the Pacific, organizing the Joint Expeditionary Force, its task forces as spearhead and shield, and the mobile service squadrons to obviate the necessity of ships returning to their base for supplies. A new scheme of command was instituted which enabled senior officers to be relieved for periods of much needed rest.

To attempt a short history of sea warfare is a bold undertaking, but Captain Creswell has written* a most interesting and instructive account of it. The changing scenes are well portrayed without too many technicalities, and the book will appeal both to the professional and lay reader.

The Battle of the Atlantic is graphi-

cally described with its savage wolf pack attacks, the vigilant convoy escorts both surface and air, and the perilous Black Gap. The grim experiences of the Russian convoys in the Arctic night are another picture of gallant convoy work. The bitter struggle in the Mediterranean with the heroic defence of Malta makes thrilling reading, while the South East Asia campaign with the tragedies of Hong Kong and Singapore was a severe lesson for us. Other tales brilliantly told are the hunting down of the *Bismarck* and *Scharnhorst*, with their uncertainties, their set-backs and their eventual triumph.

Captain Creswell concludes with an excellent summary of the six years war at sea. After the atom bomb the greatest factor on the material side was the invention of radar, in which we fortunately started with a lead and maintained it. On the tactical side success in any operation without mastery in the air was proved to be impossible. On the vexed question of the capital ship he says: "The core of naval power is now the aircraft carrier rather than the heavily gunned battleship." This is undoubtedly true, but Admiral Spruance, President of the U.S. Naval War College, whose experience as a fleet commander in war is second to none, spoke a word of caution when lecturing at the Royal United Service Institution on October 30, 1946. He said: "I am not one of those people who believe that the battleship is obsolete. The carrier people were very glad to have with them the new fast battleships." It should also be remembered that if battleships are kept paid off in reserve instead of in commission it will take many weeks if

* *Sea Warfare 1939-1945*, by John Creswell. Longmans Green 25s.

not months to render them and their crews efficient fighting units when required.

It is unfortunately a fact that when war breaks out every democratic country starts well behind the zero line in preparation, and the aggressor nation has the advantage of the initiative. Fortunately for us our insular position has hitherto enabled us to hold out until we have produced "the necessary tools to do the job." In 1914 the navy was able to hold the line until the German advance had been checked, and luckily it was stopped short of the Channel ports. In 1939 the navy and the air force were able to stave off invasion and keep our commerce going, but we were unable to save France and we lost a large part of our eastern empire. If we are unfortunately involved in another world war we may be worse off than in 1914 or 1939. In 1914 we had the Southern Irish ports and the Allies had command of the Channel and Mediterranean. In the last war we were without the Southern Irish ports and lost command of the Channel. Now our only footholds in the Mediterranean are Gibraltar, Malta and Cyprus. Palestine, Egypt and the Suez Canal may be denied to us; our army in Egypt may have moved to East Africa. There are no British troops in India, Burma is gone, and in Malaya we are struggling to quell a communist supported banditry.

Sir Denis Boyd, late naval C. in C. in the Far East, gives a very disquieting account of our position in that part of the world. In the course of a lecture at the R.U.S.I. on November 19, 1949, he stated very definitely that "Australia should be our centre of military organization and supply. If we, with the help of the U.S. had occupied Formosa when we might have done so, it would have contributed much to the defence of Hong Kong and the control of the coast of China." What do Australia and New Zealand think? Hong Kong and Singapore are much nearer to them than to us. Both Admiral Boyd and his chairman, General Sir

Neil Ritchie, deplored the lack of interest displayed by Great Britain with regard to the Far East.

The old tag "*Si vis pacem para bellum*" is as true as ever. We must ensure that we keep well ahead with scientific research and invention. Big ships take years to build and require large and highly trained crews. Small ships and air craft will be required immediately in large numbers but you cannot keep large numbers of them lying idle in peacetime. They will also require highly trained crews.

We must be in a position to play our part adequately in Europe but it will be disastrous if our obligations in the Far East are not also properly met. How all this is to be done by a democratically governed country is an ever recurring problem.

THE MAKING OF PAKISTAN, by Richard Symonds. *Faber & Faber.* 12s. 6d.

In his introduction Mr. Symonds points out the extraordinary dearth of bibliography of Pakistan both in England and America, in contrast with abundant publications on every other dominion and colony. His fine book is thus the result of considerable service in India and personal investigation. He has carefully checked all details by cross references in many quarters and while he writes with sympathy (and who could not on such a subject?) no-one could accuse him of partisanship.

The making of Pakistan, fifth largest nation in the world, is truly one of the greatest epics in history. Every observer, British and American, had agreed that it was impossible and undesirable. The British Government and Lord Mountbatten made its birth as difficult as possible by advancing the date of Britain's departure from June 1948 to August 1947, against the Muslim League's agonized entreaties. In two-and-a-half months a Federal Government had to be contrived in Karachi from which all the Hindus, the most educated of its residents, had fled. Grave problems consequent on parti-

tion remained, and still remain, unsolved. And within a few weeks Pakistan was swamped with 6,500,000 refugees from the Punjab terror. Yet now, two-and-a-half years later, Pakistan has a stable Government, balanced Budget, sound finances, a clear-cut policy; and all the refugees have found work and been absorbed.

One chapter of special interest is given to three great Muslims who laid the foundations on which Mr. Jinnah (with such able lieutenants as Liaquat Ali Khan and Kwaja Nazimuddin, the Governor-General) has built—Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, founder of Aligarh University, Ameer Ali, and Sir Muhammed Iqbal, poet and, prophet, who actually forecast the geography of Pakistan as it is, except East Bengal. The basis of their teaching was Islam as a progressive force, expressing social principles laid down by Mohammed and familiar to every Muslim. Mr. Jinnah underrated his own superb leadership when he said in 1940 that “no power on earth can prevent Pakistan.” But Islam undoubtedly has been her inspiration and the cause of her success.

Problems of partition, constitution-building, natural resources and education are well treated and there is an attractive appendix by Ahmed Ali on Pakistan's culture. Pakistan's grievances against Great Britain are sorry reading. It is difficult to understand the line taken by the Radcliffe division of the Punjab and still more Lord Mountbatten's acceptance of Maharajah Hari Singh's accession to India under the then conditions in Kashmir, whence so much strife and misery has followed. The crowning offence was the permission to India to become a republic. There was a serious danger a year ago that Pakistan would leave the Commonwealth. The better feeling to-day is chiefly due to the wisdom and tact of that true statesman Liaquat Ali Khan. Now in the light of his recent agreements with Pandit Nehru, one closes a most interesting book with the hope of brighter days both for Pakistan and India.

O. M. GREEN

SECRET FORCES, by F. O. Miksche. *Faber & Faber.* 15s.

MURDER IN MEXICO, by General Sanchez Salazar. *Secker & Warburg.* 9s. 6d.

“War for a communist state is the continuation of the revolution by other means”—so wrote Lenin in a celebrated marginal comment in a volume of Clausewitz. Lieutenant-Colonel Miksche suggests that if we regard world events in this light then “we are already at war with the east to-day.” If by war is meant the activities of what Colonel Miksche variously and somewhat confusedly describes as secret forces, partisan forces, guerrilla forces and underground movements, it would perhaps be more accurate to conclude that the Russians are already at war with western civilization but that we of the west are not as yet at war with the Russians. The possibility that sooner or later the present uneven balance will be levelled up adds particular interest to the methods of warfare analysed in this book.

The author considers that the success of an underground war depends on a number of definable factors. The movement must spring from a wide cross-section of the population; the war must last long enough to allow the underground movement to achieve full development; the guerrillas must have plenty of space in which to operate; the movement must either be supported by a regular army or it must receive political assistance from a foreign power; and finally the character of the people must be such as to allow them to fight this type of war. It is interesting to study the probable effect of national character, as Colonel Miksche estimates it, in the light of the developing struggle between Russia and the west. “Not every nation” he writes “is adaptable to underground war. The Germans' inborn sense of discipline and respect for constituted authority are serious handicaps. In general the Germans are not natural conspirators and it is interesting that

many German 'werewolves' would fight only in uniform." It is probably for similar reasons, the author concludes, that the English have never been skilled guerrilla fighters. Whether his conclusion be true or not, this in fact is not a very sound comparison. For the past thousand years scarcely a century has gone by without invading armies engaging in warfare on German soil; in these more fortunate islands we have had no occasion to take up arms, secret or open, against an invader since the defeat of the last great English guerrilla, Hereward. But if neither English nor Germans, in the author's view, are likely to make successful guerrilla fighters, "with the more individualistic and passionate Latin nations, such as Italians, Spanish and French, it is a different matter. With the Slav peoples, it is their native treacherous cunning and taste for intrigue and conspiracy that make them good organizers of underground movements."

General Salazar's book on the assassination of Trotsky in August 1940 by an agent of the Russian secret police describes what was, in effect, a single isolated operation of secret warfare. It is doubtful whether, in 1940, Trotsky and his followers by themselves constituted any serious threat to Russian security. But Trotsky in German hands—and the Germans would presumably have made use of him had he lived—could easily have become a danger. The death of Trotsky must therefore have appeared in the Kremlin as an inevitable preliminary operation before open war between Germany and the Soviet Union. Looking back, there is nothing surprising in the events that *Murder in Mexico* records. What is surprising is that the Gestapo did not take steps, or more successful steps, to thwart the intentions of the G.P.U. General Salazar, as Chief of the Secret Service of the Mexican Police, was in charge of the investigations that followed the murder. His description of G.P.U., or N.K.V.D. methods reveals nothing new though it throws up

their moral basis—or lack of it—in sharp relief. Once any corps reaches a stage in which no man can trust either his subordinate or his superior it must ultimately become inefficient. It is interesting to wonder how far the Russian secret police has developed in that direction.

GORDON WINTER.

RELIGION IN CHINA, by E. R. Hughes and K. Hughes.

THE GROWTH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, by H. H. Rowley.

THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, by T. G. Jalland.

Hutchinson's University Library. 7s. 6d. each.

There is little to say about the two first of these volumes except to commend them warmly as really competent and up-to-date expositions of their themes. One can read them with confidence as to their facts, and with pleasure because of the competence and ease with which those facts are handled.

Mr. and Mrs. Hughes write out of their own experience of a quarter of a century in China and as warm and sympathetic interpreters of Chinese thought; the book has the "feel" of reality about it. They know that we ought not to speak of so many million Confucianists, Taoists, Buddhists and so on in China, for in truth the effective religion of China is none of these by itself but a syncretism which includes elements derived from them all, and which moreover builds on at least a substratum of primitive religion not very far removed from animism. That living complex of reality is faithfully presented with a simplicity and mastery which bespeak both wide and profound knowledge, and the result is a book which comes nearer to the truth about Chinese religion than many more pretentious volumes.

Few scholars have played a greater part in the re-vindication of the place of the Old Testament in modern Christianity than Professor Rowley himself and this volume can be taken as

an authoritative exposition of the present state and conclusions of Old Testament study. It may be that "conclusions" is too strong a word, for though the point of view adopted may be described as that of the Graf-Welhausen critical theory, Dr. Rowley is at considerable pains to say that there are movements in Old Testament study which call for at least some reconsideration of that theory. It adds no small strength and value to the book that these newer points of view are clearly indicated and their importance for the understanding of any given book underlined. Dr. Rowley is always clear, concise and easy to follow, and the little volume is easily the best popular aid to the understanding of the Old Testament that we have.

It is not possible to speak in such unqualified terms of Dr. Jalland's book. He has in fact written an account of the development of the hieratic form of the Christian Church up to the fourth century, to which he has brought much learning, but, it is to be feared, much less light or perspective, and, above all, without much sense of the fact that the creation of the Church did in fact imply a great and moving adventure of the human spirit. No-one would guess from this book that the early Church lived and moved and had its bearing in the context of the Kingdom of God with all the new quality of life that that implied and involved. Dr. Jalland reduces that conception to just one among many others, and it is hard not to feel that at this crucial point his scholarship rather resembles a heap of loose stones than a planned edifice.

One feels the same loose and somewhat indiscriminating use of terms in the relationship between the book and its title. "Evolution" is a continuous process, but according to the suggestion of this book, it seems to have stopped short somewhere about the middle of the fourth century, and all the "evolution" that has taken place in the fifteen hundred years since can be apparently both discounted and discarded. Dr. Jalland is, of course, perfectly entitled

to a belief that the hieratic form of the Church is the true one; what he is not entitled to do is to use the word "evolution" for what is much more accurately described as the development of one form amongst many which the Church has in fact taken in history.

Nevertheless, if readers will read this book with the caveat that they are reading an account of the growth of one form of Church government and organization only, and that they must make their own selection of creative facts from the very thorough enumeration of them which Dr. Jalland gives, they will find this a useful account of the growth of the Church through the first three centuries.

B. C. PLOWRIGHT.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, by Basil Mathews. *S.C.M. Press*. 18s.

Son of an unknown white man from a neighbouring plantation and a Negress, who was a plantation cook, Booker T. Washington wrote his simple autobiography in *Up From Slavery*. Originally appearing as a serial in the influential *Outlook* it can be read to-day in "The World's Classics", a tribute on this side of the Atlantic to the tale of one who, born a slave in 1856, died, after signal achievements for the Negro race, in 1915.

The spirit of Booker Washington was indomitable. Mr. Mathews makes this plain enough in his admirable biography which rightly draws heavily upon *Up From Slavery* for the earlier years, completes the story and aids it with valuable critical comment. Had Booker Washington done no more than succeed with his own education and thereafter run efficiently a small Negro school his story would still have commanded admiration and respect. In fact he built up from nothing a superb Negro institution at Tuskegee, and found time to become a public figure, the spokesman of many of his people and the adviser of Presidents.

As Mr. Mathews points out it was Washington's burning belief in the Negro's need to overcome economic

servitude that was at the root of his educational plans. At Tuskegee he taught the dignity of labour, all labour, with the aim of economic independence and hence acceptance by the white people. Strangest of all he taught in such a way that the most modern efforts of our best secondary modern schools would have been perfectly comprehensible to him. He knew all there is to know about activity methods puzzled though he might be by our teaching profession's antagonism to vocational training.

Washington first gained the encouragement and confidence of large sections of the white population at the Atlanta Exposition. The fact that he had been invited to speak at all was sufficiently astonishing as this was the first occasion that a Negro had appeared "in the South on any public occasion of an official character in association with white speakers." His speech was a triumph, notwithstanding that parts of it alienated some Negro leaders who sought by political means to redress grievances.

Some of the words that won him white support were: "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." And again: "The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing."

That was Washington's basic philosophy, the need for every Negro to become a skilled citizen before he expected recognition and acceptance from the whites. That he overlooked other factors is perhaps besides the point; at Tuskegee under his own surveillance and elsewhere through his influence, he raised thousands of Negroes from squalid ineptitude to prideful usefulness.

JOHN ARMITAGE.

*****DENT*****

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*****DENT*****

THE CITY OF TWO GATEWAYS,
by Savitri Devi Nanda. *Allen & Unwin.* 16s.

LADY LOUISA CONOLLY, by Brian FitzGerald. *Staples Press.* 15s.

If it is true that half the world does not know how the other half lives, it is certainly not the fault of Savitri Devi Nanda, if henceforward we remain in ignorance of the way of life of an Indian girl of a well-to-do family, one who is now practising as a doctor in England. She was ten years old before she encountered a single British person and then she found that they were not, as she had been told, white, but pink. Her childhood is charmingly depicted ; she was not afraid of saying what she thought and altogether she did not lead the suppressed life that we imagine is the fate of all Indian girls. When she was asked her opinion of a new aunt, who had been officially called beautiful, "her face," said the outspoken girl, "is like a wasp's nest."

The city of Lahore had won her heart ; it was odd, by the way, that she saw no British people there. She wished she could live there for ever, eating 'Falooda', which is like vermicelli, made of rice flour, scented pistachio nuts and ice-cream. Her small cousin Usha was still in the teething stage and needed something to bite on. This she decided should be our authoress and wherever that hapless girl was standing, she would crawl up behind her and bite her ankle. "She's fond of you," Aunt Tara would say. But the victim, for all that, yelled.

When at last she had to do with British people it was in a hill station, where the nearest neighbour was an elderly English colonel, his young wife and their two children. The colonel, it seems, told strange tales of man-eating tigers ; but our friend thought that he went too far when he said that a tiger made a hole in the roof of his cow-shed and carried off a whole bullock. This she could not quite believe, but she smiled amiably and looked surprised "for one must be

kind to a stranger in a strange land." After reading this most interesting chronicle we can no longer say that India is for us a strange land,

Stranger, indeed, than Indian scenes are some of those to which we are introduced in reading of the life of wealthy families in the eighteenth century in Ireland and England. When they visited the Playhouse in Dublin, illuminated by tallow candles which hung from the middle of the stage and were every now and then snuffed by some performer, two soldiers with fixed bayonets stood like statues on each side of the stage to keep the audience in order, for the galleries, we are told, were very noisy. But what the soldiers were expected to do is not revealed.

Lady Louisa, a daughter of the Duke of Richmond, married at the age of fifteen a gentleman whose estate in Ireland was self-supporting, seeing that it possessed a brew-house, malt-house, pigeon-house, coach-house, with spinning, turf-cutting, tanning, cattle-rearing and many other activities being carried on. We are taken to her other home in Cheshire and to the gayest life in London, where the youthful George III. would have liked (but his mother decided otherwise) to marry Lady Sarah, Louisa's younger and very lovely sister. A nephew was Charles James Fox, whose father as Paymaster-General had amassed a fabulous fortune. We also meet the fantastic Earl-Bishop of Derry, the eccentric Fighting Fitzgerald, the beautiful Perdita Robinson and many others. The rivalry between Pitt and Fox was prophesied by Louisa's sister Lady Holland when Pitt was only eight years old, "Mark my words," she said, "that little boy, the cleverest child I ever saw, will be a thorn in Charles's side as long as he lives."

We are told how the Redcoats arrested Lady Louisa's other nephew, Lord Edward FitzGerald, for whose apprehension the Government had offered a reward of £1,000. When he died of his wounds in prison Louisa made the arrangements for the funeral which

took place at night, in order to prevent any rioting. Those were sad days for Ireland in the summer of 1798; but there were silver linings to the clouds. It was customary at charity sermons for attractive ladies to make the collection and Louisa tells us of one at her Irish home when, for some female orphans, "we had a charming collection of £819," and this although the preacher was so ill that after ten minutes the congregation begged him to say no more.

HENRY BAERLEIN.

THE CUMBERLAND WORDSWORTH, by Howard Sergeant. *Williams & Norgate. 7s.*

THESE YEARS, edited by Howard Sergeant. *E. J. Arnold (Leeds). 4s. 6d.*

Howard Sergeant's book on Wordsworth begins with a most interesting comparison between the language and imagery of the *Immortality Ode* and those of the more recent work of Dylan Thomas, together with a comment on Herbert Read's theory about Wordsworth's decline. After this he goes on to say that his aim is to consider Wordsworth from the "regionalist approach", and then he proceeds largely to ignore this aim and to give us a straightforward and readable biography of the poet in which the "regionalist approach" provides little more than a setting for the events of his life.

Mr. Sergeant fails to differentiate between the various types of country and landscape found within the Lakes. Because Hawkshead and Grasmere are reasonably close together he does not recognize that there is a great difference between the wild upland of Tom Heights, Conistone Old Man, Walna Scar, and upper Dunnerdale (all of which were within reach of the boy at Hawkshead), and the mild, cosy valley of Grasmere and Rydal. Again, he over-simplifies the matter when he calls Hawkshead the poet's "spiritual home". It is probably true, as he says, that in attaching his affections to Hawkshead rather than to Penrith,

Wordsworth was turning his back on the mercer's shop and his grandfather's repressive discipline. But Penrith is not Cockermouth. The years at Cockermouth were as happy as his schooldays at Hawkshead, and even after the death of his mother, he often used to spend his holidays there with his father. His tribute to the Derwent is too well-known to need quoting, and I believe too that the bare shapes of the fells to the south and east of the town (Grasmere, Melbrake, Skiddaw, Saddleback) so impressed themselves on the boy's mind that they formed the bed-rock on which his thought was to be built. It is not the woods of Esthwaite nor the gentle bays of Rydal which provide the most tremendous and unforgettable images of Wordsworth, but a barer, starker scenery:—"a huge stone", "a huge peak, black and huge", the "sounding cataract", dreary moors,

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and "deep and gloomy woods."

Mr. Sergeant points out that Wordsworth's egalitarian faith was at least as much the result of his contact with the Cumberland 'statesmen' as with the French revolutionaries, but he makes no attempt to trace the development of this society of statesmen, nor to consider the historical, racial, climatic, and physical forces which brought it into being—all of which, surely, are essential to the "regionalist approach". Yet, while I feel that Mr. Sergeant has not succeeded in his task as he himself has defined it, this does not mean that he has not written an agreeable book. It contains little that is new, but it makes available to a more general public the discoveries and speculations of the last 20 or 30 years of Wordsworthian research. It is a book which should be strongly recommended to many of the thousands whose interest in the Wordsworth centenary centred less in the poems than in daffodils rotting on memorial fountains.

Mr. Sergeant, as editor of *Outposts*, has done much to make contemporary poetry available to the public, especially to a provincial audience. In *These Years* he has tackled the job of introducing it to the schools, of trying to dispel the illusion that all poetry ceased when the voice of T. S. Eliot was heard. His method is that of infiltration: he leads the reader from John Masefield and Alfred Noyes to some of the more intelligible productions of most of the better-known names of to-day. For my own part, I would prefer a shock method (let me say, to avoid confusion, that of my own poems the one he includes seems to me an excellent choice). I believe that the young reader is often delighted to find everyday language and everyday life and objects playing a part in poetry. He is not worried about rules and schools, and he responds gaily to Lawrence's tortoises, Carlos Williams's wheelbarrow, and perhaps most of all to W. H. Auden's railways and mines and T. S. Eliot's street lamps and stuffed men. But, maybe, Mr. Sergeant is

right to be more tactful—I daresay most teachers will agree with him. Anyway the book contains a number of very good poems (notably those by Dylan Thomas, Vernon Watkins, and Edwin Muir) which may light a fire in an adolescent heart. I hope all teachers of English will try to see a copy.

NORMAN NICHOLSON.

DOSTOEVSKY: The Making of a Novelist, by Ernest J. Simmons. *John Lehmann.* 18s.

A GENTLE CREATURE: And Other Stories, by Fyodor Dostoevsky. *John Lehmann.* 8s. 6d.

Tolstoy's American biographer now gives us a book to contradict Mr. Middleton Murry's assertion that all his life Dostoevsky was merely under the delusion that he was writing novels. Quoting Tolstoy's dictum that art consists mainly in the communication of feeling, as opposed to thought—which was applied to Dostoevsky—he criticizes the author of *Crime and Punishment* primarily as a novelist rather than as a philosopher or thinker. Professor Simmons divides Dostoevsky's characters into three main types: the "Meek", the "Self-Willed", and the "Double" or split-personality. He does not agree that there is a complete break between Dostoevsky's early work and what he did after his return from Siberia but suggests that the novelist's imprisonment proved a period of creative incubation and that his later writings show a logical fulfilment of what had gone before. His conclusions about Dostoevsky's religious and philosophical views would seem to be that, at his death, the novelist held a wavering Faith in God and an unshaken faith in "the Russian Masses."

Professor Simmons's examination, with the aid of notes and letters, of the novelist's creative processes—particularly in the chapter he calls "In the Author's Laboratory"—is lucid and interesting although it is arguable that

he treats Dostoevsky and his characters for too much of his book as case-histories and only belatedly as exemplars of an inward moral conflict. Though he ridicules the grotesque theory that Dostoevsky had an Oedipus complex in relation to 'Mother' Russia he yet writes that the novelist had been made by that repulsive and sexy blue-stocking Polina Suslova "a victim of the love-hate emotion of a female 'Double' in real life"—which we may perhaps be forgiven for dismissing as an oversimplification of a human relationship in terms of psycho-analytical jargon. Professor Simmons quotes, but would seem not to have digested, Dostoevsky's own words: "Duality is common to us all. Give yourself to Christ and its pain will be alleviated"—which gives us the clue, surely, to the didactic element, the nature of the religious thought, underlying the five great novels. We agree more readily when Professor Simmons attributes much of Dostoevsky's 'Slavophilism' to his unfavourable first impressions of Europe. He opposed an idealized view of his own country to one already formulated from books, and equally inaccurate, of western habits of life and thought. He found, too, advanced political and atheistic ideas that he feared would wreak spiritual havoc among his beloved Russian people.

As an introduction to the writings of the great Russian novelist, or as a 'refresher course', Professor Simmons's biography can be confidently recommended. One slips into this kind of phraseology because, as the reader should be warned, the book is written in readable, but sometimes curious, professorial American—which is not quite the same thing as Fowler's English. The Professor has given us a scholarly treatise. If he had been less confident of "the efficacy of psycho-analysis . . . for revealing the mysteries of personalities in literature" there would have been little in it to criticize.

Messrs. John Lehmann have issued this representative collection of

Dostoevsky's short stories in a translation by David Magarshack who also provides a brief introduction that is useful as a biographical summary but contains a number of facile generalizations, due perhaps to compression, for which it is fortunate that we have Professor Simmons's work as a corrective. It is, for instance, taking a myopic view to express the moral lesson of "The Christmas Tree and the Wedding" in terms, simply, of an attack on "the acquisitive system of society."

Besides the title tale the stories selected include "White Nights", "Memoirs from a Dark Cellar", "The Honest Thief", "The Peasant Marey" and "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man." They are rewarding not only in themselves but as typical examples of the best, and sometimes the worst, of Dostoevsky's writing—prolixity, even here, is a literary vice—and often as portents of an even greater achievement.

Dostoevsky paid tribute to his literary precursor in the famous *mot*: "We have all emerged from under Gogol's 'Cloak'." The abiding tenet the two writers had in common, as we see from these tales and as Mr. Magarshack remarks in his Introduction, was "Gogol's faith in the divine spark in man." This new translation must, I fear, be damned in the phrase "workmanlike". It is the common, if not inevitable, fate of Mrs. Garnett's temerarious successors.

LUKE PARSONS.

In the last number of *The Fortnightly*, Dr. Helen Woodhouse in her article "The Threefold Work of Martin Buber" referred to the collection of Buber's essays entitled *Mamre*, published by Melbourne University Press. The book is also available in England (*Cambridge University Press*. 12s. 6d.).

BOOKS ON THE TABLE

America, Beardsley, country life, the Greek world, poetry, politics, Shakespeare, typography and woodwork are the topics on the table. But the alphabet is no arbiter here. And summer is about ; soon the buildings opposite will have gone into hiding behind the greenery in Soho Square ; the sun shines, and the return to Italy is still four months ahead. This incipient holiday mood calls first for the countryside, "the great entail" as Ruskin called it.

"How sweet the moonlight"

And who better as a guide than one who remembers always that he inherits the land from God, on loan for life ? The joyful debt sparkles through all S. L. Bensusan's studies of woodland ways and gardening lore, bathes his shrewd delineations of rural life and character in a kindly glow, and shines out, warm and healing, from his *QUIET EVENING* (*Blandford Press*, 10s. 6d.). Maybe the author's very output is to blame, the many books of his recent years causing a taken-for-granted attitude, but it is a fact that lesser men are constantly being sorted out for the lofty commendation of the popular critics. One day, somebody, moved by more than the townsman's sentimental nostalgia for the earthy and elemental, is going to "discover" Mr. Bensusan. Here is one reader who is not waiting for the time when his quiet evening shall close to record again the delight he lavishes now. His latest book is the chronicle of a country year and his wisdom and exact observation take it far above any calendar collection of whimsical sayings simperingly paraded. To take at random : the telling of the sounds and scents of a June night, when "as songs decline flowers take charge," is to be pierced as if by R.L.S.'s celestial surgeon ; and to see the drama of the night hours in the snow footprints of January, or the last brave efforts of the autumn rose-bush, in Mr. Bensusan's company is to

realize how poor they are who have it not.

Hardy country

GEORGE HERBERT'S *COUNTRY PARSON* (*Faith Press*, 5s.) might have been gazing across three centuries at S. L. Bensusan, to contemplate the country gentleman "improving his grounds" and engaged in the "honourable employment" of a justice of the peace. George Herbert, too, had wisdom and insight and the passages from his forgotten book have been most happily chosen here by G. M. Forbes. In 1630 the clergyman needed to put all that sincerity of heart and mind, as well as his skill as a lawyer and a physician, at the disposal of his rural parish.—This particular one of Herbert's was Bemerton, deep in Wiltshire, which is one of the counties of *WESSEX* (*Batsford*, 12s. 6d.). The others are Dorset and Hampshire, with west Berkshire and east Somerset included. The many illustrations in this book underline the enthusiasms of its Wessex-born author, Ralph Dutton, who pieces together the history and associations of the large area, set against varying scenery and architecture. Marlborough, Blandford, Odiham, Avebury, yield their riches no less than do Winchester and Salisbury, Weymouth and Dorchester. There are farming lands, coasts and downs ; there are abbeys, great houses and cathedrals, and there are some of the most charming villages in England.

Before the machine age

And here, "we find ourselves at the cottage door . . . Let us enter and listen to the tale that each of the gray old bits of furniture about the rooms has got to tell us," as F. Gordon Roe says in *ENGLISH COTTAGE FURNITURE* (*Phoenix House*, 12s. 6d.). There are chests and coffers, desks and boxes, forms and stools, tables and cupboards, presses and dressers, beds and chairs, candlesticks and clocks, all bearing their signs of distinctive craftsmanship. The

research has been collated with a passion of zeal which, in this case, is the same thing as enjoyment. To meet one's own pet rascal so innocently engaged is diverting: "It was under the Merty Monarch that the domestic history of bookcases may be fairly said to have begun."—J. B. Morrell, the author of *WOODWORK IN YORK (Batsford. 30s.)*, also credits the second half of Charles II's reign with the use of walnut and mahogany, from which "the cabinet-maker gave us the beautiful work so much prized to-day." The furniture here goes beyond the cottage, to the inn, the great house and the Church. This is a sumptuously produced picture book and, indeed, both these volumes teach much by letterpress and even more by their superb photographs and drawings.

Printer and Draughtsman

The same might almost be said of *THE TYPOGRAPHIC ARTS (Sylvan Press. 21s.)*. The erudition of Stanley Morison and his clear, terse style are independent of such aids, but the reader's eye can rejoice in the grace of Mature Florentine of 1428, or in Holbein's design for a printer's device, or for the Carolingian Roman lettering which recalls that first dazed moment under the portico of St. Peter's. Half the book is addressed to designers and art students (with an appreciation of the influence of the Kelmscott Press) and the second part to an academic audience, so that the interested layman has the best of both worlds, practical and theoretical.

—Both enter into the typographical detective investigations revealed in *HOW TO DETECT BEARDSLEY FORGERIES (Limited edition. R. A. Walker, 60 St. Michael's Rd., Bedford. 10s.)*. This pamphlet makes a companion for *The Best of Beardsley*, that beautiful volume compiled by R. A. Walker for The Bodley Head, hailed ecstatically on this page nearly two years ago. Beardsley's work was certainly unique—for where are his imitators? As for the forgers, its individuality should have made them fight shy of it,

Mr. Walker suggests. He thinks that the inferiority complex rather than profit is behind their choice. To him, the arrangement of dots, lines in hair or borders, and the use of paper, ink and signature out of chronological order are enough to expose the trickery. A Dr. Watson, let us say, should be able to detect it in clumsy hands and profiles which Beardsley always drew so delicately.

How is it made?

Still concerned with practicalities, Beardsley's magic pen gives way to *POETIC TECHNIQUE (Poetry Lovers' Fellowship. 7s. 6d.)*. Walter De La Mare writes an Introduction to the three essays: "Stream and Structure in English Poetry" by Oliver C. de C. Ellis, "The Composition of English Poetry" by Geoffrey Johnson, and "The Rendering of English Verse" by Christabel Burniston. As the Introducer says, poetry is concerned "with every experience known to mankind. But even the simplest states of experience, of being, are indefinable." And if this goes for poetry too, the four have yet been able to write engrossingly about ways and means, using copious diagrams and examples. The book ends with a warning that the poet can be chased off the stage, particularly in Shakespeare, by the unnamed producer who seems to be striving to "do this as it has never been done before."

Probing Shakespeare

SHAKESPEARE SURVEY III (Cambridge University Press. 12s. 6d.), like its predecessors, takes note of all such trends; it is edited as before by Allardyce Nicoll. There are articles on "The Structural Patterns of Shakespeare's Tragedies", on "The Meaning of *Measure for Measure*" and on "A Stratford Production: *Henry VIII*". This last is by Muriel St. Clare Byrne who, though probably another of those not referred to by Christian name among the Sunday newspaper devotees, is surely one of the most distinguished

critics of Shakespearian production. The series is proving more helpful to the fundamental study of Shakespeare than the word 'survey' might imply.

Star-spangled manners

On the other hand, Beverley Nichols's *UNCLE SAMSON* (*Evans*, 12s. 6d.) deals with fundamentals in the survey manner. This is not to say that he has not written a most entertaining book about the phenomenon of America. Fear, in all its manifestations on that continent, whether of death, growing old, Communism, Negroes or Charlie Chaplin, is wryly 'surveyed'. Christmas, Father Divine, the craze for noisy ties, comic strips, psychiatry, are all 'surveyed' with hearty laughs spaced between the disarmingly sententious comment. The fact is that he tries too hard, probably from a worthy motive, to be fair. A cheap sneer at America is immediately followed by a cheaper one at Britain. He loves the human race so strenuously in all its oddities, that the reader begins to wonder why the need for all the perspiration. In fine, Mr. Nichols has grown older, but not out of those naughty reportings which were the fruit of unusual intelligence in one so young. Nevertheless, his book is not to be cast aside, and is not likely to be, after a dipping into, for it is disappointing only in the sense that his youthful promise is still youthful promise.

Steps in civilization

After the comic hats and whistles of a cup-final excursion into politics, the reader finds Kathleen Freeman's a stately pilgrimage to the GREEK CITY STATES (*Macdonald*, 15s.). She has chosen nine among the many scattered around the Mediterranean and in southern Italy. An exception, however, is Massalia, founded on the shores of the Gulf of Genoa, not far from where Shelley was drowned 2,400 years later. The others are Thourioi and Abdera whose sites are

now hard to find, the masses of ruins which were Acragas and Miletus, Cyrene of the British Museum statues, Corinth which St. Paul visited in A.D. 51 and with whose people he later corresponded, Seriphos one of the poorest of the Athenian islands, and Byzantium whose importance as Constantinople long outlasted the glory and grandeur of Athens and Rome. The rise and fall of these city-states is recounted in prose that is worthy of such a theme, and Dr. Freeman concludes with an examination of why this independence did not prevent their eventual collapse and why their unity might not have guaranteed survival. The moral is very much to the point in the consideration of present-day disruptions and rivalries.

Round the world in 1949

Which plunges us straight into the modern maelstrom, with the *ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF WORLD POLITICS* (*Faber & Faber*, 30s.) for a rudder. And in good working order it is, from the Aaland Islands to Zionism, and with an appendix chapter on the "British General Election of 23 February 1950." The cross-references perform a proper function in stimulating to further reading, and any bias in treatment of subject is not discernible. Walter Theimer and Peter Campbell have edited not a Who's Who but a What's What of politics. The affairs of countries are presented as they were last year and without history for a background. That is provided by the inclusion of political thinkers and their ideas and, in this connection, it is extraordinary that Colonel Blimp should have a paragraph to himself and Laski not. But neither has the National Council for Civil Liberties; though the Ku Klux Klan is in attendance, eye-slits, hoods, thuggery, murder and all. It is a dull encyclopaedia that has no chinks.

GRACE BANYARD.

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Rev. xi., 19; iv., 4, 10.

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